THE TIMES
35p
No. 66,070
THURSDAY DECEMBER 11 1997
http://www.the-times.co.uk

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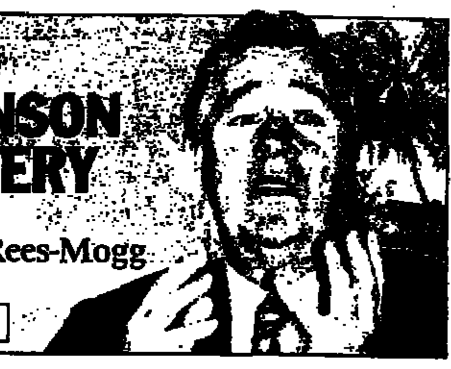

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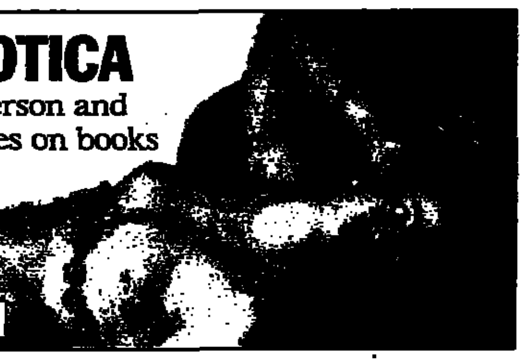

HOW I BECAME JAMES BOND
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24 PAGE SPECIAL SECTION

Whips to give 'yellow card' warnings

Minister goes in revolt on lone parents

By Philip Webster and Jill Sherman

A GOVERNMENT minister resigned and several ministerial aides were poised to quit as Tony Blair last night faced his biggest revolt since the general election.

The rebellion over benefit cuts for single parents escalated when Malcolm Chisholm, the Scottish Office Minister, wrote to the Prime Minister leaving his post and telling him that he could not vote for "an attack on some of the poorest women in society".

Then Gordon Prentice, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Gavin Strang, the Transport Minister went as well; and as the vote approached it appeared likely that several others holding similar positions would join a revolt that had gathered pace in the previous 24 hours and lose their jobs as a consequence.

Alice Mahon, PPS to Culture Secretary Chris Smith, was also expecting to be sacked after speaking out against government policy during the Commons debate. Mrs Mahon described the cuts as "a piece of social engineering Stalin would have been proud of."

Many more backbench MPs were preparing to withhold their support from the Government, ending with a jolt the honeymoon between Mr Blair and his parliamentary party.

Conservative MPs were buoyed by the news that Mr Blair had lost a minister and gave him an uncomfortable time at his weekly Commons question- time session. William Hague and Paddy Ashdown exploited his difficulties and Diane Abbott, the leftwing Labour MP, standing just behind Mr Blair, attacked a plan that will mean lone parents who are new claimants being £11 a week worse off from next April.

Mr Chisholm's resignation was a serious blow to the Government, which was hoping that the revolt would be contained to MPs and aides.

After giving up his post only months after his appointment Mr Chisholm was being praised by his colleagues for making a big personal sacrifice. He immediately loses the £23,000 he was being paid as a minister on top of his MP's salary.

Chisholm: "this attacks the poorest women"

But his decision and the readiness of many MPs to rebel reflected the deep unhappiness of most Labour MPs at the Government's decision to implement Conservative cuts in single parent benefit. Large numbers who were preparing to back the Government said they were doing so with regret.

The rebels were likely to pay a price. They were expected to receive "yellow card" warnings from the Whips, telling them that a repeat of their conduct could lead to suspension from the parliamentary party.

Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, tried to defend the cuts. She said the Government's objective was to improve the standard of living of lone parents and their children by encouraging them off benefits and into work.

Asked if it was introducing the cuts because it had to, or because it wanted to, Ms Harman said: "We are bringing them in because we are saying that we are concerned about the low standard of living and the life on benefits and the life of poverty that many children lead in families headed by a lone parent."

Mr Chisholm, 48, told the Prime Minister he had decided to step down "with great reluctance and regret". The MP for Edinburgh North and Leith was in charge of local government and transport in the Scottish Office and had been looking after the Government's review of road building projects.

In his letter Mr Chisholm, who later confirmed he would be voting against the Government said: "I have enjoyed my work there enormously, but cannot bring myself to vote with the Government tonight on lone parents."

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said of Mr Chisholm's departure: "We regret that a very able minister has decided to resign from the Government but it is entirely a matter for him."

In his letter of reply Mr Blair said: "This Government was elected on a clear platform to help the needy in our society. In doing so, it will face many tough choices.

"I am convinced that, within the limited resources that are available to us, the best way to tackle poverty among lone parents is to help them back into work." He said of the decision: "I recognise that this is a very difficult decision, but it is right and it is fair."

The Government moved quickly to fill the gap left by Mr Chisholm. Calum Macdonald, the Western Isles MP, will replace him. Anne McGuire, the MP for Stirling, is expected to be appointed as Mr Macdonald's replacement as Parliamentary Private Secretary to Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary.

Mr Chisholm had talks with Mr Dewar before deciding to go. Mr Blair's spokesman stressed the Prime Minister believed he had been an extremely good minister and regretted his decision to depart. The spokesman said: "I think this is a distinction we would draw with the last Government: the Prime Minister takes decisions and he sticks to them and he sees them through and along the way there may be people who disagree and they are perfectly right to put their case."

Mr Chisholm was effectively the first minister to quit the Blair administration, though Derek Foster resigned less than 48 hours after he accepted the post of Public Service Minister just three days after the election. Mr Chisholm said, that he had thought for some time about his decision.

Politics, page 12

ANTHONY UPTON

Harriet Harman yesterday: "We are concerned about poverty of lone parent families"

Tony Poppins gets tough

Political Sketch

Matthew Parris

"The nation's First Nanny," Crispin Blunt (C, Reigate) called Tony Blair. This chapter in the Tony Poppins Annual is headed *The Medicine Fails To Go Down.*

Clare Short's face said it all. "Fed up" understates. As Mr Blair's thunder turned to bluster, to rant, to bleat, she sat beside him, tapping her fingers on her notepad.

Theatre critics will confirm that drama may turn upon a furious passage, or a moment of intense quiet. Yesterday's astonishing session of Prime Minister's Questions turned upon both. The hush as Diane Abbott rose to tell her Leader softly that he was wrong was as unforgettable as the noisy energy with which Blair beat the air and by turns hectored and rebuked. The new Government has never looked so awkward nor its Prime Minister so rattled. This was Blair's bloodiest half hour.

Diane Abbott wounded worst. William Hague was insistent: but cutting single parents' benefits is a Tory idea so the hour was not his. He attacked on a narrow front, alleging that Mr Blair was "not straight" with the voters in proposing what before the election he had criticised.

The Prime Minister struggled to deny this. Under pressure he began taking refuge in the time-honoured response of a nanny with a pushchair-ful of trouble: You're wrong. Why? Because.

He told Hague "sorry but that is simply not correct," and, "sorry: just to repeat again ...".

To Paddy Ashdown he said "that is simply *incorrect,*"

Contined on page 2, col 1

Brussels calls for lamb to be included in bone ban

By Charles Bremner and Michael Hornsby

SCIENTISTS in Brussels caused confusion throughout Europe yesterday by calling for a ban on lamb containing spinal bone because of a risk that it might be infected with the "mad cow" disease BSE.

The Scientific Steering Committee, an influential 16-member advisory panel, said the European Union should apply the ban to meat from all animals more than 12 months old, but added in a footnote that in "high risk" countries, apparently meaning Britain, the age limit should be reduced to six months. The ban would chiefly affect the spinal column and associated nervous tissue, known as dorsal-root ganglia.

If a six-month age limit were enforced, much of British lamb production would be affected. Leg joints would appear to be safe, because they contain no spinal bone. Whether ordinary lamb chops would be affected is not clear, and any ban might depend on how the chops are cut from the spinal column.

Of the 16 million sheep slaughtered last year, 12.4 million (78 per cent) were between the ages of five and 12 months, according to the Ministry of Agriculture. Britain has 86,364 sheep farmers, by far the largest number in the EU. Of these, 45,295 are in England, 16,348 in Wales, 14,598 in Scotland and 10,123 in Northern Ireland.

Officials in Brussels said the recommendation by the committee was merely preliminary advice that would still have to be considered by the European Commission and EU member states.

The proposal is unlikely to find support because EU members only reluctantly accepted less drastic controls on sheepmeat due to come into effect next month but likely to be postponed until April. The committee's proposal would also apply to cattle over 12 months old, effectively extending throughout the EU the ban on beef on the bone that Britain is introducing. Most other EU states would regard such a move as wholly unnecessary.

Sir David Naish, president of the National Farmers' Union, said: "I am exasperated by yet another recommendation which would appear to go well beyond what is necessary, taking into account the fact that the scientists themselves say the risk involved to human life is so remote."

John Thorley, chief executive of the National Sheep Association, said: "This is absolute nonsense. We are being asked to change the whole way we rear sheep as a precaution against a risk that does not even exist." The National Federation of Meat and Food Traders said butchers would fiercely resist any move to implement the com-

Continued on page 2, col 4

"Mary had a little lamb, safely off the bone"

Balloon deal

Richard Branson was in talks to retrieve his *Virgin Global Challenger* balloon from Algeria last night ....Page 7

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Royal Yacht, one careful owner, under offer for less than £100,000

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

THE Royal Yacht *Britannia* is to be sold for her scrap value — less than £100,000 — when the Government decides next year whether to hand her over to Edinburgh or Manchester for her final berth.

George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, yesterday announced that the bidders for the yacht had been shortlisted to two. However, Ministry of Defence sources said that Manchester was ahead "on points" at this stage.

Peel Holdings, which has proposed berthing the *Britannia* in the Manchester Ship Canal next to the Barton Swing Bridge at Trafford Park, came in with a last-minute bid and there was considerable surprise yesterday that the company had been selected with Edinburgh.

Mr Robertson said that geography had not played any part in his decision to select Edinburgh and Manchester as the best options. All the other proposals, he said, which included Portsmouth, Glasgow and three from London, had their merits. However, he said his only aim was to ensure that the "fine fabric" of the yacht was preserved for the country for a long period and that its future should be dignified and appropriate.

Mr Robertson also disclosed that the Government would retain a legal right to step in at some future date to scrap the yacht if the owners failed to keep it in immaculate condition

Mr Robertson said that if the yacht fell into disrepair because of diminishing tourist interest, it could still be scuttled in ten years' time or so — the option favoured by the Princess Royal and, it is believed, by other members of the Royal Family. That view is echoed by Lord Callaghan of Cardiff, the former Prime Minister, who says in a letter to *The Times* today that as interest fades in the yacht over the next few years, *Britannia* will become an "embarrassment and a liability". Detailed negotiations will now be held with Peel Holdings and with Forth Ports, based at Leith, before the final choice is made next spring.

Mr Robertson said that the aim of the Government was not to make money out of selling Britannia which was why she would be sold for her scrap value only.

The important point, he said, was that the yacht was "deeply loved" by the people of Britain and it was vital that it should be preserved for the benefit of the general public.

After discussions with Buckingham Palace, it has been agreed that the Queen will consider loaning some of the Royal Family treasures on the yacht or to allow replicas to be made.

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will today attend the decommissioning service for Britannia at Portsmouth. The crew will continue serving on the Royal Yacht until next February.

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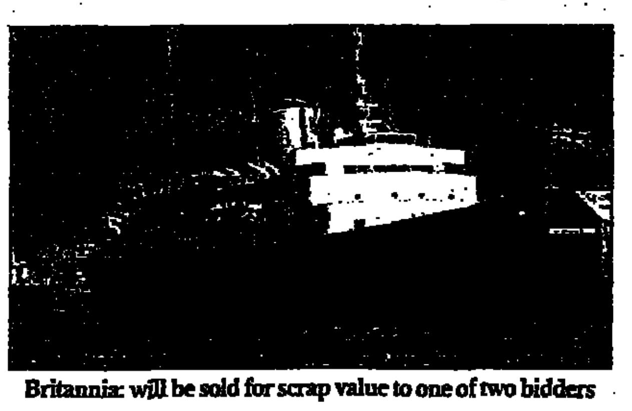

Britannia: will be sold for scrap value to one of two bidders

Rail union calls one-day strikes

Britain's largest rail union yesterday announced a series of one-day strikes.

The RMT transport union said its members would take action against two train operators, South West Trains and Wales & West on December 19, January 5 and January 12. The union claims the companies have failed to honour a productivity deal.

Yeltsin taken to hospital

President Yeltsin was admitted to a sanatorium yesterday with an acute respiratory infection and was expected to remain there for ten to 12 days. Mr Yeltsin, 66, has a long history of heart disease and other health problems and last year underwent a heart bypass..............Page 16

Carbon gas cut deal agreed

Industrial nations yesterday adopted a protocol at the climate conference in Japan that will legally bind them to cut emissions of greenhouse gases by 6 per cent between 2008 and 2012..............Page 9

That one should make the run-up to the wedding most enjoyable, Sir
Grey

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Oxbridge pacified by promise on £35m college fee system

David Charter reports on Blunkett's plans for the universities' traditional small-group teaching method

OXFORD and Cambridge universities said they were *"reassured"* after hearing Government views on the future of their £35 million college system yesterday.

The vice-chancellors of both universities were told by David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, that he did not want to damage the quality of their teaching and research. The £35 million, which goes directly to the colleges to preserve their traditional small-group teaching, is expected to be merged with the main university grant.

It is a deal which may please smaller colleges because it means no loss of money in the short-term. But it will anger wealthy colleges which will regard it as an assault on their autonomy. Once the money is subsumed in the general university budget, they fear there will be nothing to protect it from being cut in future years.

Mr Blunkett gave no details yesterday on how the college fee system will be changed, but made it clear that the status quo would be altered. The fee is being reviewed on the recommendation of Sir Ron Dearing following his report on the future of higher education. Sir Ron said ministers should determine whether the £35 million represented a "good use of resources".

A spokeswoman for Cambridge said: "It was a friendly and constructive meeting. No detailed proposals were mentioned although it was agreed the matter of the college fee should be resolved as quickly and as fairly as possible."

The Education Department is expected to call further lower-level meetings in the coming weeks to work out details of the changes. The meeting at the Department in London yesterday was set up after the vice-chancellors, Colin Lucas of Oxford and Alec Broers of Cambridge, met Kim Howells, the Minister for Lifelong Learning, a month ago. At it, Mr Howells said the Government would act on Sir Ron Dearing's call, during his investigation into the future of higher education, for a review of the college fee system. Mr Howells said he wanted to "safeguard excellence" at Oxford and Cambridge and did not want to damage teaching or research.

This echoed the view of the Higher Education Funding Council, which advised the Government to "do nothing to damage the special character and world-class standing of education at Oxford and Cambridge". The Council has said that Oxford and Cambridge will benefit from a revised funding system for all universities being introduced from 1999 or 2000. For the first time this will reward teaching excellence and the widening of participation to state schools and mature students.

A funding council spokesman said: "We are not tailoring our funding systems with two universities in mind. We are trying to promote policies for the whole sector which reward quality and widen access."

Figures on Tuesday showed that Oxford still had much to do to attract more students from state schools. Just 41.6 per cent of places went to state schools, compared with 43.6 last year and down on the 43 per cent of offers won by state-educated pupils. At Cambridge, 45 per cent of this year's new students came from state schools. It has set a target of two-thirds of students from the state sector.

A deal which simply diverts the £35 million away from the colleges but gives the universities the same amount will be seen as a compromise by Labour MPs who wanted the money redistributed throughout all universities. One senior MP last night called such proposals a "fudge". Cambridge's Professor Broers said: "We are still talking to each other about how we find a way of preserving the excellence of our two universities."

Dr Lucas, Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, stressed that Mr Blunkett had repeated his commitment to that aim. "We put our case that we have unequalled institutions that provide demonstrable excellence," he said.

The universities claim the £35 million grant — which means Oxbridge students receive £2,000 more state funding per head than those in other universities — is vital to preserve academic excellence and the tutorial system of teaching.

Blair gives six-month reprieve to miners

By Nicholas Watt and Christine Buckley

SEAN DEMPSEY

Arthur Scargill: said that the move was no more than a temporary moratorium

TONY BLAIR announced a surprise reprieve for the coal industry yesterday in an attempt to save thousands of mining jobs.

Amid growing concern about the threat to the industry, the Prime Minister told the Commons that Britain's three main power generators had agreed with RJB Mining, the main privatised producer, to take coal until the middle of June next year. Their contracts were due to end in March, which had threatened 5,000 jobs and eight pits.

To cheers from the Labour benches, Mr Blair said: "This will allow the UK deep-mine coal industry to continue production at present levels without immediate redundancies or pit closures."

The Prime Minister said that the Government would use the six-month delay to carry out a wide-ranging review of Britain's energy requirement. Mr Blair's intervention during Prime Minister's Questions was the second time in a week that he has acted to protect the coal industry. Exactly a week before — also at Commons Questions — Mr Blair announced a halt to the building of gas-fired power stations because he said that he was determined to protect the coal industry.

The move was designed to fend off a backbench revolt after scores of Labour MPs complained that the Government was in danger of presiding over the demise of the coal industry. The MPs demanded a equality for coal and called on the Government to stop the "dash for gas" that is jeopardising the future of the coal industry.

Mr Blair made the announcement yesterday after Michael Clapham, the Labour MP for Barnsley West and Penistone, said that the coal mining industry was facing a crisis. Underlining the depth of feeling on the Labour backbenches, Mr Clapham asked the Prime Minister to look at a number of short-term measures, including a restraint on open-cast mining and an increase the generators' obligation to stock more coal.

Despite the welcome on the Labour benches, the Prime Minister's announcement was dismissed by Arthur Scargill, the President of the National Union of Mineworkers, as no more than a repeat of the temporary moratorium on coal closures announced by Michael Heseltine in 1992 after the uproar over the plans to shut pits. Mr Scargill, who appeared before the Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee hours after Mr Blair's announcement, said: "It is only a stay of execution. It only lasts 12 weeks. What this industry needs is long-term security."

Mr Scargill said that by endorsing a free market in energy "the new Labour Government has betrayed Britain's miners and mining communities". He condemned the Government's approval of *five new gas stations since the* election as "disgusting and a complete betrayal of every commitment given by Labour."

However, the Energy Minister, John Battle, said that the Government was taking strong action to defend the coal industry. *In addition to* the six-month reprieve, the Government was also insisting that the power generators offer for sale to RJB Mining coal-fired stations that they no longer require.

No questions for Robinson until new year

By Nicholas Watt and Chris Ayres

MPs will have to wait until the new year before they can question Geoffrey Robinson, the multimillionaire Paymaster General, about his offshore financial interests.

As Tony Blair was forced to defend the beleaguered minister for the second time in a week, it emerged that Mr Robinson will not have to appear in the Commons until January 15, at the next session of Treasury questions.

Conservatives accused Mr Robinson of neglecting his ministerial duties this week when he threatened to sue two Sunday newspapers that made allegations about his financial affairs.

Tories maintained their attacks on Mr Robinson yesterday with barbed remarks about him in the Commons at Prime Minister's Questions. John Townend, the MP for Yorkshire East, asked Mr Blair whether it was the "height of hypocrisy" that Mr Robinson had recently penalised middle-income savers when he was "a beneficiary in a multimillion-pound Channel Islands trust". Mr Townend was referring to the new Individual Savings Accounts, launched last week by Mr Robinson, which will replace the Peps and Tessa schemes.

Mr Townend said: "Doesn't this show that under new Labour, fat cats flourish. Middle England suffers? You say: *'Put your trust in me'* — *your* ministers put their trusts offshore!"

Mr Blair said that Mr Townend's facts about Mr Robinson were wrong and he added that the new savings scheme would benefit six million people. After Prime Minister's Questions, Mr Blair's Official Spokesman said that the Paymaster General was not involved in tax avoidance schemes: "The Paymaster General has the Prime Minister's full support. He is an able and efficient Government minister."

Mr Blair has rallied to the defence of Mr Robinson because he believes that the Paymaster General has done nothing wrong and because he is determined that such a "high calibre" businessman should have a role in Government.

Mr Robinson's career has not been without problems. His lavish lifestyle and enormous wealth point to a highly successful career in industry, but his two most senior positions came to an abrupt end. The minister's career also brought him into contact with one of Britain's most notorious fraudsters, the late Robert Maxwell. He became director of several companies ultimately owned by Maxwell.

Mr Robinson still has connections to Mr Maxwell's former empire, and is currently the only director of Hollis Industries, now in the hands of an administrator.

Mr Robinson's connections to Mr Maxwell affected his company TransTec and the company's share price halved in value to 45p from 1993 to 1994. *It was at this time that* Mr Robinson decided to stand down as chief executive, and was replaced by Richard Carr. This shake-up could have been prompted by other TransTec shareholders.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Move to protect patient secrecy

Patients are to be identified by their NHS number, rather than name, on computer records to protect the confidentiality of information.

Guiding principles for ensuring confidentiality were issued yesterday after a report drawn up for the Health Department by Dame Fiona Caldicott, of Somerville College, Oxford. The British Medical Association had expressed concern that patients' names and addresses were being passed unnecessarily to organisations and groups within the NHS not involved in the patient's care. The BMA welcomed the new guidelines.

Nurses at risk

Hospitals must prosecute anyone who attacks staff, Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, said. New figures showed that nurses are five times more likely to be assaulted than the rest of the population.

Jail warning

One third of women's jails needs special managerial attention to cope with chronic problems including overcrowding and poor regimes, says a report by Sir David Ramsbotham, the chief inspector of prisons.

Arson conviction

Mohammed Khalid, 37, a father of five, planted fire bombs in doorways in Keighley, West Yorkshire, claiming he was fighting evil forces. Bradford Crown Court convicted him of arson and adjourned the case for reports.

Channel switch

France will soon overtake Britain for the second biggest population in the EU. The British total is due to grow from 58.5 million to 61 million by 2030 but France will overtake it by about 2005 because of a lower death rate.

GP drowned

A coroner recorded an open verdict on Nicholas Brierley, 48, a GP under investigation for forging patients' signatures in a £250,000 medical fraud. He drowned in his swimming pool at Harston, Cambridgeshire.

Cheaper Egypt

Tourist visas to Egypt will be issued free for the next three months in an attempt to win back tourists after the Luxor massacre. All Egyptian domestic flights will halve fares for tourists, and cruise ships will not pay port charges.

Tony Poppins at bay

Continued from page 1

and, again, "that is simply not right."

To Phil Willis (Lib-Dem, Harrogate & Knaresborough): "that is just *nonsense*."

To Laurence Robinson (C, Tewkesbury): "We have kept every single promise. *Yes* we have." And to John Townend (C, E Yorks): "on the *facts* he is *wrong*."

Ms Abbott was devastating: a sweet moment for a woman humiliated by Labour orders that she avoid all contact with the press during the last general election campaign. "How does he justify ...?" Abbot began, almost whispering. Ms Abbott's voice has never been quieter nor reached so far.

By now Mr Blair was rattled. His answers became longer and looser. He looked exasperated. Paddy Ashdown twisted the knife, reopening another wound. How about closing tax loopholes like offshore trusts, he asked, using the proceeds to rescue benefits? "Why ask the poor to pay for the poor?"

"That is simply not right," bleated the Prime Minister, above the hubbub. Tories, outnumbered two to one by Labour, made more noise than the muted cheers of the government benches. When Hague mentioned ministerial resignations this had been news to many, who turned, puzzled, to each other, mouthing "who?"

But if the calm around Ms Abbott spoke volumes, so, did the agitation with which Mr Blair grasped at a curious tactic. He started listing all the things he had done which were *not* Tory policies. To delineate the territory *not* in enemy hands sounds insecure. It was noted of the Emperor Franz Josef that as he became more embattled, his official title grew, finally reciting every land, however minor, of which he was lord.

When Blair was reduced to saying he thought Tinky Winky a better Treasury Spokesman for the Liberal Democrats than the one they had, we sniffed a serious loss of Prime Ministerial cool.

But a thought more encouraging for Mr Blair occurs. I was reminded yesterday of Commons scenes and resignations during the first years of Margaret Thatcher's premiership. She sounded shaky, but she stuck to her guns. And some of us came to regret our little mutinies.

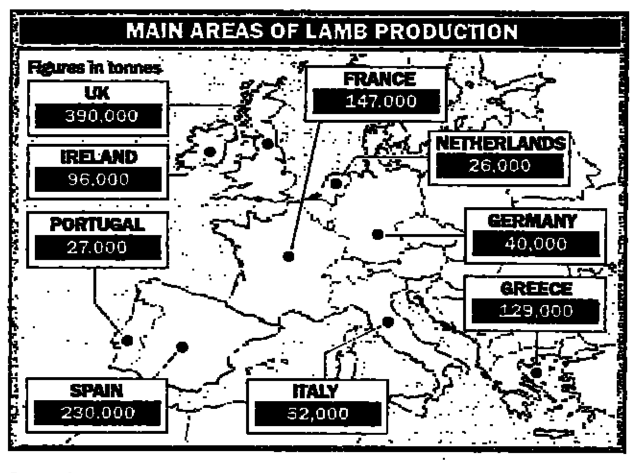
Calls for lamb to be included

Continued from page 1

mittee's recommendation. "This would cut a swathe through lamb sales and have a significant impact on the industry," John Fuller, the federation's director, said.

The reasoning behind the Brussels' proposal is that BSE might have passed to sheep through contaminated feed and be disguised as scrapie, a very similar brain condition that has been present in sheep for centuries without harming humans. The Government's Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee has long accepted that this is a theoretical risk, and tests have so far found no evidence of BSE in sheep. The committee recommended last year that the Government should ban consumption of the spinal cords and brains of sheep, but only from those over 12 months old. Nearly all lamb sold in shops is from animals younger than that. But the committee said this week that it saw no reason for banning lamb on the bone.

MAIN AREAS OF LAMB PRODUCTION



Professor Richard Lacey, a leading microbiologist who was among the first scientists to raise the alarm about beef, said last night that he could see no danger from lamb and described the Brussels proposals as "wildly over the top", adding: "I would like to see all of the scientific data supporting scrapie claims. We know that, historically, the human being is not vulnerable to scrapie. This has been researched for decades and as far as I am aware, under natural conditions BSE has not spread to sheep. It can be spread under experiments but it has not happened under natural conditions."

The Brussels steering committee, which is composed of scientists from all 15 member states, was set up under Emma Bonino, the Consumer Health Commissioner. Its brief is to give advice on food risks independently of the policy-making committees that come under the EU's farm directorate.

'I cannot think that a better life of Jane Austen than Claire Tomalin's will be written for many years'

Philip Hensher, *Mail on Sunday*

'A book that radiates intelligence, wit and insight'

Michiko Kakutani, *New York Times*

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Choristersacked for bribing boys on tour bus

By Simon de Bruxelles

AN ADULT chorister was sacked from a cathedral choir because he had offered the boy singers £9 to be sick on a tour bus so he could get off and have a cigarette.

Gavin Rogers-Ball, 30, a talented alto with the Wells Cathedral Choir, was also accused of reading *Private Eye* in the stalls and gossiping during evensong, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

But it was the "act of corruption" on the journey home to Somerset after a performance in Germany that led to his dismissal. After Mr Rogers-Ball offered a £9 reward to anyone who would be sick, a ten-year-old treble vomited in the back of the bus.

Mr Rogers-Ball initially refused to pay but handed over the money several days after the boy's fellow pupils at Wells Cathedral Junior School threatened to go on strike.

The former chorister, who now works as an icer in a cake factory, claims he was unfairly dismissed when the cathedral authorities heard of the transaction.

Mr Rogers-Ball, a former pupil of Millfield School and a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, won a scholarship to Wells Cathedral in August 1993. In return for singing with the 48-strong choir, he received £2,500 a year, free food and accommodation in the 13th-century Vicar's Close beside the cathedral.

Canon Paul de Neufville Lucas, the Precentor of Wells Cathedral, told the tribunal in Bristol that the chorister made his offer during the long coach journey in June 1996. "I felt the applicant's suggestion to the choristers was inappropriate. He had behaved immaturely and irresponsibly. Offering a payment of £9 was an act of corruption.

"The boy's mother said she was deeply distressed by what happened. She said he was a very impressionable young boy. She said she did not want him to grow up thinking he could gain financially from such acts of folly." Canon Lucas said the cathedral had taken the decision to dismiss Mr Rogers-Ball after the boy's headmaster at Wells Cathedral Junior School requested it. He added: "The incident on the coach was one of many factors that led me to the conclusion that his scholarship should come to an end. In 1994, I received two letters of complaint about Gavin, one from a member of the governing body and one from a rural dean.

"They said that during an ordination service they had both seen him reading a copy of *Private Eye*.

"During an ordination service large numbers of the clergy sit in the cathedral and we are open to scrutiny. It is important to show respect. Reading *Private Eye* is certainly disrespectful, as would reading any other magazine be for that matter. I also received complaints that the applicant had been talking in evensong in 1995.

"There were also a number of complaints in Vicar's Close about his flat. Our former choirmaster once had to telephone him in the early hours to complain about noise. We had no criticism of his ability as a choral scholar. He has a very good voice and is a talented musician."

Rogers-Ball: had read *Private Eye* in the stalls

Mr Rogers-Ball, of Evercreech, Somerset, said his request on the coach was only a joke and not intended to be taken seriously. "We were travelling back from Germany. It was about 11pm and the men of the choir were in high spirits. Some had been drinking, though not myself, and we were all saying we were dying for a cigarette.

"As a joke I said it would be a good idea for one of the boys to be sick and the men could stump up a sum of money. There was no immediate reaction but some minutes later one of the boys came down to the back and said one of them had been sick."

He added: "I met some of the boys from the football team and they said as the lad had been sick I should pay up.

"I then bumped into some junior school pupils just before choir practice and they said they would go on strike if I did not pay. I realised this would not stop so I decided to pay him £9 after evensong.

"I also gave him a teddy bear I had won at the Wells Fair and a note telling him he had carried out a truly gutsy performance. An awful lot of hoo-hah has been made about this but at the time I said it on the coach, it was just a joke."

Gerald Butler, a former vicar principal at the cathedral, said Mr Rogers-Ball had done nothing wrong but was disliked by elders at the church. He said: "When I heard Gavin had been sacked my reaction was one of incredulity. I felt the remark made by Gavin on the coach was just a joke. But this is a reminder that even remarks made in jest can have repercussions.

"I knew the Precentor did not like Gavin but I got in touch with him to request a meeting. The Precentor told me Gavin ought to grow up and ought to find a career for himself."

The tribunal's decision will be delivered later.

A Royal Navy helicopter winching up members of the BBC unit cut off by the tide

Actors in the reconstruction waiting on the clifftop

Film crew for rescue series forced to dial 999 for help

By Simon de Bruxelles

A BBC crew filming a reconstruction for the real life rescue series 999 had to be rescued itself yesterday. A naval helicopter and coastguard cliff rescue teams retrieved the six men and three inshore lifeboatmen from a Cornish beach after they became trapped by the tide.

They were recreating the experience of a family that became stuck on the 180ft cliffs at Whipsiderry beach, near Newquay, in March. A coastguard spokesman said: "As the Newquay inshore lifeboat approached the beach during the filmed reconstruction, the engine failed and the boat went aground. The occupants became stranded on the beach and were cut off by the tide."

The lifeboatmen, a BBC cameraman and a climber taking part in the filming were lifted to safety by a Royal Navy helicopter. Other members of the film crew were winched up by the coastguard team that had earlier participated in the reconstruction. Neither Michael Buerk nor any other of the show's presenters was present.

Simon Rabbetts, a coastguard watch officer, said: "This was a textbook rescue. We are sure the resulting film will reflect the speedy and efficient manner in which the film crew and lifeboatmen were evacuated quickly and safely." A BBC spokeswoman said: "It was always part of our plan that the 999 team would be taken off the beach by the lifeboat but there was a back-up if conditions were not suitable, which was for them to be winched up the cliff.

"There was no danger to the 999 crew, the actors taking part in the reconstruction or to the emergency services involved, and we would like to stress that the crew were not caught out by the tide."

The reconstruction had included a helicopter from RAF Chivenor in Devon which was called away on another mission before a mobile phone call alerted the Falmouth coastguard to the real life drama.

Two cliff rescue teams and a helicopter from RNAS Culdrose, Cornwall, were dispatched. Newquay's main lifeboat attended and a third Sea King helicopter returning from an earlier mission acted as a message relay.

In March, Jeremy Woodward, a holidaymaker, slipped while climbing cliffs in the cove. His partner, Janette Campbell-Johnston, and 14-year-old son, Theo, scrambled towards him across the rocks but were cut off by the tide.

Three lifeboatmen, Jeremy Griffiths, Gareth Horner and Martyn Snell, risked their lives to save them. They are to receive the thanks of the RNLI inscribed on vellum.

Fastest driver in court hit 154mph

By Kevin Eason, Motoring Editor

A MOTORIST putting his new Aston Martin through its paces on the M5 recorded the fastest ever speeding offence by a car. Anthony Fear was clocked at 154mph in the £85,000 DB7.

When Fear was stopped by police, he claimed the speedometer read 130mph, magistrates at Cullompton, Devon, were told. But PC Robert Kew, who was operating a handheld laser gun at junction 28 of the M5 with PC Roy James, said in a written statement: "We saw a large sports car going well in excess of the speed limit and the speed was checked at 154mph. When we saw the reading, the air in our vehicle turned blue."

Fear, an unmarried father of two from Cannington in Somerset, said he only put his foot down on the throttle for five or six seconds. "It only takes about six seconds for an Aston Martin to go from 70mph to 150mph. I really did not realise how fast the car would go. It wasn't explained to me when I bought it."

The magistrates banned him for eight months for speeding and fined him £750 with £30 costs.

Fear's 154mph in June has only officially been beaten by Anthony Pearce in January, 1995, when he was said to have been clocked at 178.9mph. That was on his 900cc Honda Fireblade motorcycle, one of the most powerful in the world.

Fear topped the previous fastest official car speed by 1mph. Achille Mizzotta, who was recorded by police driving a BMW M5 on the M4 at 153mph, was charged with dangerous driving. For the more serious offence he was jailed for six months and banned for four years.

Oarsman hailed for brave voyage

From Mark Souster in Barbados

A BRITISH oarsman has completed a two-month transatlantic trip in a rowing boat. He overcame a series of disasters, including the loss of his crewmate with a back injury.

John Searson, 35, whose colleague withdrew seven days after they had left Tenerife, was expected in Barbados last night after being pursued by sharks, hit in the chest by flying fish, and experiencing a boat-equipment failure. His feat of endurance in completing the 2,500 miles across the Atlantic was hailed by one of the race organisers as an epic achievement of physical and mental courage.

However, despite arriving an unofficial eighth, his boat has been disqualified from the 21-boat race because it became a one-man outfit.

Searson, a metereological officer from Jersey, decided to carry on after his friend, Carl Clinton, was forced to retire after fracturing his spine in an accident on the *Commodore Shipping* on October 19.

Mr Clinton, a hospital consultant, said yesterday: "I assumed that John would have to give up. But minutes before the rescue boat came to get me, he said: 'I'm going on on my own. I'm happy bobbing around on my own. If I went back I would only have to go back to work.'"

Mr Clinton added: "I was amazed and very concerned. I thought I might never see John again. What he has done is remarkable."

Mr Searson will have raised more than £40,000 towards the cost of a scanner for Jersey General Hospital. Last night his parents, girlfriend and wellwishers went out to greet him.

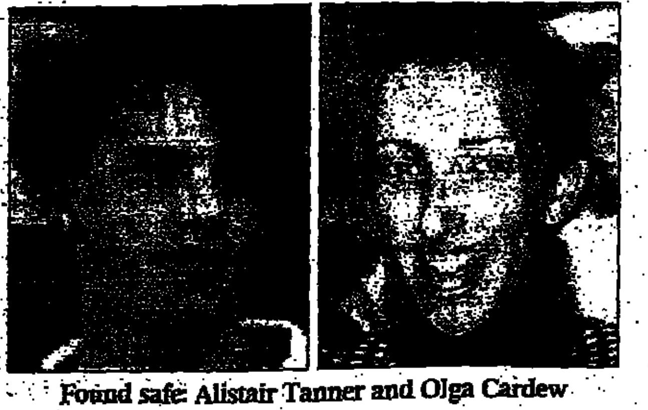
Showdown in Paris for the young couple who played truant for love

By Joanna Bale
and Susan Bell

A TEENAGE boy and girl who ran away from boarding school for a romantic trip have been tracked down in Paris. The parents of the 17-year-olds Olga Cardew and Alistair Tanner were yesterday travelling to France to bring them home.

Teachers at the £13,746-a-year Bryanston School in Dorset said that their academic and discipline records were good before their disappearance, and it has not yet been decided whether the sixth-formers will be disciplined. The school has no uniform and emphasises creativity and individuality.

Bryanston's marketing manager, Clare Price, said: "The parents and the school will be discussing what line ought to be taken when they get back. It is not something that we would want our pupils to be encouraged to do.



Found safe: Alistair Tanner and Olga Cardew

This is not a prison, pupils are allowed out at certain times as long as they sign out. In this case, they would not have been given permission to go to Paris without their parents' consent."

Olga's family live in Monte Carlo, and Alistair's father, Andrew Tanner, is a doctor at North Tees General Hospital, Stockton-on-Tees. Friends said that the couple had been planning their escapade for some time because they wanted to spend time together before being separated during the Christmas holidays.

They disappeared on Monday. The alarm was raised when a member of staff spotted them in the nearby town of Blandford Forum as they went to the bus station. It is thought that the couple took a bus to Salisbury, caught a train to Portsmouth and then a ferry to Le Havre and another train to take them to Paris.

They telephoned schoolfriends shortly after arriving in Paris, and Alistair called his father, who was said to have been "angry and disappointed" at their behaviour. The school said that they were now being looked after by Olga's brother and his wife in Paris.

Mrs Price said: "We know exactly where they are. They are safe and they are not sleeping on the streets or anything, which is the main thing. It is now a matter for their parents, who are going to collect them."

The chairman of governors, Lord Justice Phillips, declined to comment yesterday. Former pupils at Bryanston include Lucian Freud, Philip de Glanville, and Sir Terence Conran and his son Jasper. Sir Terence is now a governor.

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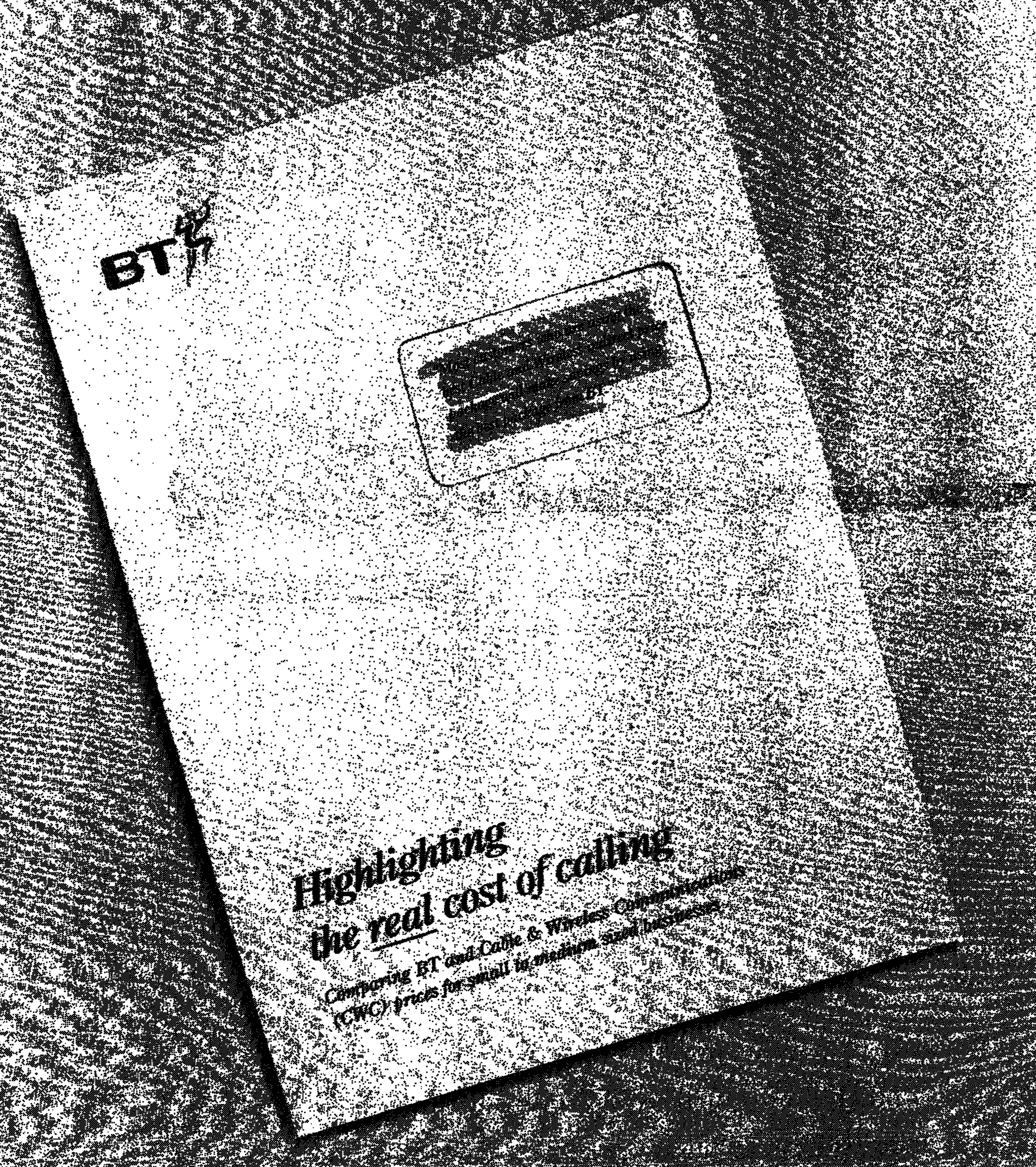

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Record award for woman made to feel worthless

Executive who was undermined by a network of men at the top has won £234,000, reports Joanna Bale

A WOMAN who said that she was made to feel worthless by a network of male colleagues was yesterday awarded record damages of £234,000 for sexual discrimination.

Esther McLaughlin, 46, was appointed as a £46,000-a-year assistant director of finance, personnel and strategy for social services in the London borough of Southwark, but was moved around a variety of departments over two years and then made redundant. She claimed that male directors colluded to undermine her position, and that projects she should have led were allocated to others.

The award by an industrial tribunal is the largest for sexual discrimination in civilian life. Only payouts by the Ministry of Defence to women dismissed for pregnancy were higher.

Mrs McLaughlin's husband Charles, a computer consultant, gave evidence of her distress at the tribunal in Croydon. Yesterday she clutched the hands of her daughters Kirsty, 18, and Fiona, 14, as she spoke of her fight: "I want my girls to see that this is not normal and that they can go on to have careers. The money will be invested for my family's future, although my daughters are now expanding their Christmas list."

She now earns £18,000 as a contracts manager, and accepts that her redundancy meant that her local-government career was over. Her award included £218,655 for loss and future loss of earnings, £15,000 for injury to feelings, and aggravated damages after the tribunal criticised the Labour-run council for refusing to disclose important documents in the case.

Mrs McLaughlin, of Southgate, North London, had worked in senior positions for Camden Council and Grampian District Council before joining Southwark, where she became an assistant director in 1992. She said: "I was made to feel that I had no contribution to make and that I was basically worthless.

"I felt isolated. It was like being bullied and I lost my confidence. A year before, I had achieved an MBA. They picked on me simply because I was not part of the long-established male network of directors."

After being made redundant in November 1994, she was unemployed for six months before taking a temporary job as a filing clerk. She said: "I slid a long way down the greasy pole. It's a highly competitive market. I now have to accept the fact that I will not be able to continue my career in local government, for which I trained. This case has taken three years and it has been a long struggle."

Michele Sedgwick of the Unison union, which backed the case, said: "This should highlight to employers that it is no good having an equal opportunities policy if they do not address what is actually going on in the workplace." No decision was made on a further claim for unfair dismissal, which rests on file.

Southwark Council said it planned to appeal, and added: "The judgment is based upon a technicality and we have compelling evidence to show she was treated as fairly as all other employees affected by restructuring. We dispute the excessive award for loss of earnings, particularly for an individual who is well qualified and should be more than capable of finding work in the open market."

JAMES HORTON

Esther McLaughlin yesterday: "I want my daughters to see that they can have careers"

Rector angers parish by sheltering paeodophile priest

By Ruth Gledhill

A RECTOR who sheltered a clergyman convicted of sexually abusing boys was yesterday accused of double standards by his parishioners.

Three members of the parochial church council of Lighthorne, Warwickshire, have resigned in protest and the church's nativity play is in jeopardy. Canon Roger Williams, rector of St Laurence, Lighthorne, offered shelter to an old friend on his release from prison. Canon Williams, 60, was criticised for pleading for forgiveness for Canon Terence Knight, a former member of the General Synod, yet refusing to let divorced people marry in his church.

The tranquility of the village has been shattered by the rector's decision to take in Canon Knight on his release from prison last Friday. Canon Knight, 59, a former priest at St Saviour's Church, Stanshaw, Portsmouth, had served 21 months of a 3½-year sentence imposed at Winchester Crown Court in March last year. He had admitted indecently assaulting boys aged from 11 to 14 after inviting them to his home and plying them with alcohol over a decade up to 1985.

At the time, the Church of England was criticised for allowing him to remain in the ministry, in spite of knowing about his offences. He has still not been deprived of his holy orders.

The two clergy became friends at Lichfield Theological College in 1960 and Canon Knight stayed at the Lighthorne rectory while he was awaiting trial. However, he left the modern rectory on Monday night after protests from some villagers. Samantha Lloyd, 31, the mother of two boys, has resigned from the parochial church council and has begun attending a neighbouring church.

Mrs Lloyd, who was baptised in St Laurence's, was angered by the rector's decision to invite Canon Knight into his home without consulting parishioners. She is also hurt that the rector pleaded for forgiveness for his friend but refused her permission to marry in the church because her husband, Derek, a fireman, was divorced. "It is one rule for the church and the church's people, and another rule for us," she said.

John Sharp, church co-warden with Sir Adam Butler, son of the late Rab Butler, said: "I feel sorry for Roger. He was doing what he thought was the Christian thing. He was misguidedly helping him [Canon Knight] until he could get himself sorted out.

"The trouble is, he was not aware of the reaction that would cause among the mums of the village. If Roger had talked it through with all of us before, things might have been different."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hindley ruling due next week

Myra Hindley is expected to learn next week whether her High Court challenge to overturn the decision that she must die in prison has been successful. Edward Fitzgerald, QC, for Hindley, told the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, sitting with Mr Justice Hooper and Mr Justice Astill: "Effectively, this is the last chance for this applicant."

Hindley, 55, has served 31 years. She was jailed in 1966 for the murders of Lesley-Ann Downey, 10, and Edward Evans, 17. A provisional 30-year minimum sentence imposed in 1985 was changed to a "whole life" sentence in 1990 by David Waddington, then Home Secretary. Jack Straw confirmed the increase earlier this year.

Detective charged

Detective Constable Terence McGuinness, 39, based at Limehouse police station, East London, and two former police officers, Kevin Garner, 37, of Brentwood, Essex, and Keith Green, 40, of Ilford, Essex, were remanded in custody by Bow Street magistrates, charged with conspiracy to supply drugs and burglary.

MI6 evidence secret

Evidence of damage allegedly caused to national security by a former MI6 officer's unlawful disclosure of information will be heard in camera when he is sentenced this month, the Recorder of London ruled. Richard Tomlinson, 34, has admitted passing material about MI6 to an Australian publisher.

The end of Finnish

The BBC confirmed yesterday that it is to close the Finnish department of the World Service at the end of the month after 57 years of broadcasting. The World Service no longer broadcasts on short wave to Finland but makes news and analysis programmes that it sells to domestic stations.

Puppies poisoned

Three young children have found their two Labrador puppies poisoned. Three adult dogs belonging to the Owen family of Southery, Norfolk, also died. Police believe the dogs may have been fed a mixture of food and poison to end their barking. A man aged 73 was arrested and released on police bail.

Santa cuts heating bill

Staff at an engineering firm have been ordered to wear Santa Claus hoods over the festive period. "It keeps employees' heads warm and saves on heating bills," said Brian Campbell, head of W. Campbell & Son, in Hull, who is wearing a hood, as is the works dog. "It's a great way of lifting morale."

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Railway restores the three classes

By Robin Young

FOR the first time since 1912 a rail company is to offer three classes of service on its trains.

The Derby-based Midland Mainline yesterday reintroduced the service, with classes no longer described by those socially divisive descriptions, first, second and third, but instead premier, business and standard.

The premier class service includes free car parking, priority telephone booking, complimentary meals and drinks served by a personal steward at passengers' seats, free newspapers and magazines, and onward travel by Underground. Tickets, which went on sale yesterday, cost the same as a former First Class Open.

The service will be offered from January 5 on trains between London St Pancras and Nottingham, Derby, Leicester and Sheffield on weekdays.

Business class travellers during the week will be greeted on the platform and given seats either in first-class or in a specially segregated standard coach. A business-class menu will be available for an extra charge.

Schoolgirls set up company to do undercover work

By Philip Delves Broughton

Brennan: becoming a businesswoman at 16

A CLASS of schoolgirls has set up a company to make and market a fashion item that combines novelty with utility: knickers with pockets.

The lower sixth form of Tiffin Girls' School in Kingston, southwest London, having grown tired of having nowhere to stow their money and keys when heading out for the evening in their party dresses, devised an alternative to asking boys to look after their things or leaving them in their handbags.

There is already interest in the pocket pants from Bentalls, the department store, and the girls want to set up stalls at railway stations to sell their wares. They see the market for the knickers as 13-to-23-year-olds; the items are unlikely to have much appeal for the more mature woman.

Sharon Brennan, 16, the marketing director, formed Taboo, the Tiffin girls' company, along with her 18 classmates under a young enterprise scheme which teaches schoolchildren about business. They raised their £250 seed money by selling 25p shares to friends and parents. Their first £100 profit is already in the bank.

Miss Brennan said: "Every girl needs pockets in her pants. When girls go to clubs and parties wearing skimpy things without pockets," says Miss Brennan, "they put their handbags in cloakrooms but want somewhere to put emergency notes, keys, ticket, condoms."

The girls in question have neither the money nor, so far, the poise to be able to resort to the sort of handbag that can hang from a forearm, providing both adornment and storage space while not interfering with the more exciting party activties.

The Taboo company buys simple cotton bikini bottoms in black, white, rose and pink from a wholesaler, and the girls themselves sew on the pockets — either a small pocket on the hip or a bigger one at the back. The pockets are for folding tickets or money, and maybe the odd key. Anything larger would produce an unsightly bulge.

The cotton pocket pants, which come in a ribbon-fastened plastic pouch, retail at £3. A version in 92 per cent cotton and 8 per cent Lycra is available for £2.50. For £5, the cotton range will have hand-sewn daisies, or Chinese dragons, Union Jacks, photographs of pop stars, and pictures of friends — although that does make one wonder what kind of friend would put a picture of you on their underwear.

Next on the company's list are G-strings. Said Sharon: "You want to look good without a VPL — visible panty line. So we've designed patterned G-strings with a high leg and low waist.

"We decided that what's wanted now is feminine underwear. The tomboy look is definitely out. Girls want to know that what they're wearing looks nice and is comfortable."

A spokeswoman at the school said: "We think they're doing a great job."

ANDRE CAMARA

The knickers-with-pockets created by Taboo, the Tiffin schoolgirls' company

Primary schools alerted to drugs

By David Charter
Education Correspondent

PRIMARY schools should display contact numbers for drug advice agencies so that child addicts can seek help, the National Association of Head Teachers said yesterday.

Pupils as young as five were arriving at school with greater knowledge of drugs than their teachers and needed professional advice, it said in a 12-page advice document being sent to every school. Heads were told not to use heavy-handed measures such as drug tests, adopted by a growing number of independent schools.

The association also said that schools should never attempt to search pupils, because of the danger of claims of assault. Only parents or police should be asked to search children.

Liz Paver, president of NAHT and head of Intake Primary School in Doncaster, South Yorkshire, said the days when primary schools were free of drugs had gone: "Many children live in communities where drug abuse is rife. They come to school educated about drugs beyond the knowledge of their teachers.

"Some children in some areas are coming into schools displaying disturbing behaviour. There are seven, eight and nine-year-olds abusing solvents regularly in gangs."

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Hanged student led secret life

By Adam Fresco

A UNIVERSITY student who failed his first-year exams but continued to live as a student hanged himself after his parents discovered he had not attended lectures for almost a year.

James Pope, 20, joined Plymouth University in September 1995 for a BSc computer systems network course but did not do well enough to stay on. He tried to switch to a business course but submitted only two pieces of work instead of the 12 required.

He went home to his parents in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, during the holidays and they believed he was happy with his life as a student. His four student flatmates in a shared house in Plymouth also did not realise he was not attending lectures, because he bought books and appeared to study at home.

He was last seen in the business school in November 1996 for a term assessment. By June this year the university sent a letter to his parents with a withdrawal form after seven months of non-attendance.

On October 15 his mother, Ursula, contacted the university and his secret life was exposed. She was left in "a state of disbelief", an inquest in Plymouth was told. She rang her son at his lodgings to find out what was going on and James disappeared. His body was found hanging from a tree in the city's Plym Bridge Woods over a week later.

His father, David, told the inquest that he spoke to his son two or three times a week. "He said he was getting along well with his studies. He was an extremely good young man and there was no cause for concern. I can offer no explanation for his actions apart from his exams failure."

Nigel Meadows, the coroner, recording a suicide verdict, said: "Students come under enormous pressures ... I would urge any young person with similar problems to talk to someone about it so that matters do not overtake them."

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WORLD TELECOM

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Please can I have my balloon back, Branson asks

Andrew Pierce in Marrakesh reports on the Virgin chief's border diplomacy to rescue his £250,000 craft

DIPLOMACY by Richard Branson to retrieve his *Virgin Global Challenger* balloon, which fell on Algeria's side of its closed border with Morocco, appeared to be paying off last night.

Relations between the two countries are poor. The Algerian Government has refused requests to let Moroccan helicopters fly 35 miles across the border to retrieve the runaway £250,000 balloon.

The delay has dealt a blow to Mr Branson's hopes of relaunching his attempt to circumnavigate the globe on Sunday.

Two hundred heavily armed Algerian soldiers stood guard over the balloon yesterday after it fell in the foothills of the Atlas mountains. They found it at the same time as a Virgin crew, flying in a Lear jet, spotted it at 7.40am yesterday after a 90-minute search. It came to rest in spectacular sandy terrain.

Late last night the Virgin team was given permission to land at 8.30am today at Tindouf, a military base 165 miles from where the balloon landed. Jeremy Macadie, the British chargé d'affaires in Algiers, was a key figure in the negotiations.

Huge obstacles remain. The Algerians were still refusing to provide a flight out and have rejected a request by the Virgin team to drive a container lorry with the balloon back across the Moroccan border to Marrakesh. A Virgin spokesman said: "There is still a lot more negotiating to do before we get her back."

Rory McCarthy, one of the co-pilots, who is a world skydiving champion, offered to parachute into Algeria to stabilise the balloon, but the request was turned down.

Fears grew throughout yesterday that the balloon would take off again as the scorching Saharan sunshine heated up the remaining helium. At one stage it soared to 80 feet. But the soldiers, after being radioed instructions from the overhead Lear jet, deflated it and secured it to trees.

There were unconfirmed reports last night that the one million cubic metres of bulletproof material was being towed across the desert by an Algerian tank trailer. The technicians who designed and built the balloon fear it could have been permanently damaged when it was packed up for transportation by the Algerian military.

> ❛Our spirits are not dampened. If we get it back in one piece, it will be a good omen❜

Mr Branson, who was due to return to London late last night, remained optimistic despite the latest setback. He said: "The good news is that the balloon is safe. From what we have seen from the plane, it looks in good shape. I have still not given up hope that we could be ready to try again on Sunday or Monday.

"It has not dampened our spirits. It has made all of us even more determined. If and when we get it back in one piece, it will be a good omen. When I saw it drifting away on the launch day, I thought that was it. But now I am in much better shape."

The Virgin engineers were pinning their hopes on the expectation that the balloon had not suffered serious damage in a relatively soft landing in the desert.

Mr Branson conceded that the team had considered but rejected building a second envelope to ensure against disaster striking during the inflation. He said: "It was an expensive option, but in hindsight one we should have acted on. We are kicking ourselves for not doing it."

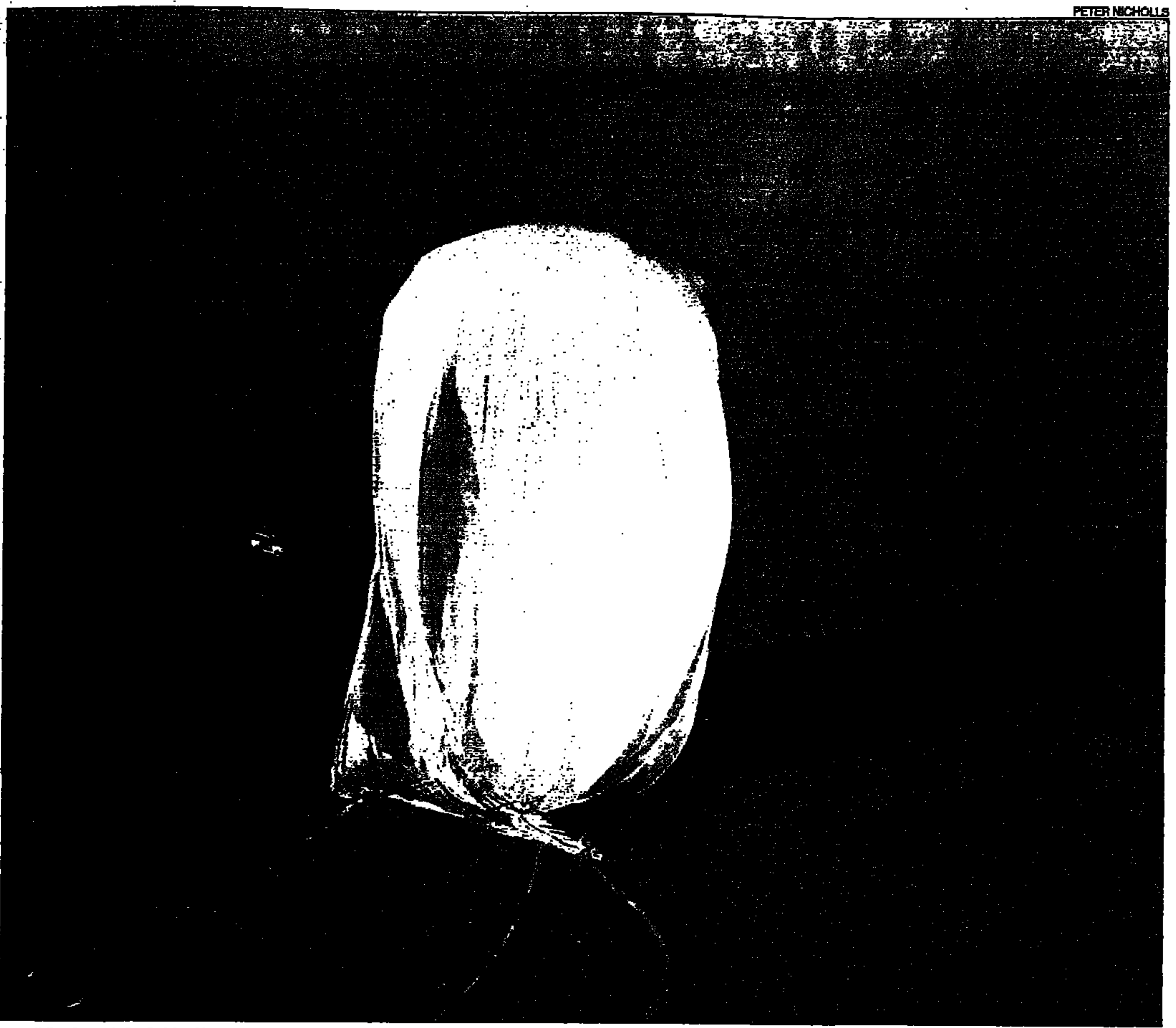
An option still being canvassed is to build a replacement if the balloon has been badly damaged. It would not be ready until January 12 and would take off without Mr Branson. The businessman is due to take part in a major court case in Britain two days later.

Having crashlanded in Algeria during the first attempt in January and with the balloon stranded there once more, *Virgin Global Challenger* has spent more time in Algeria than any other country.

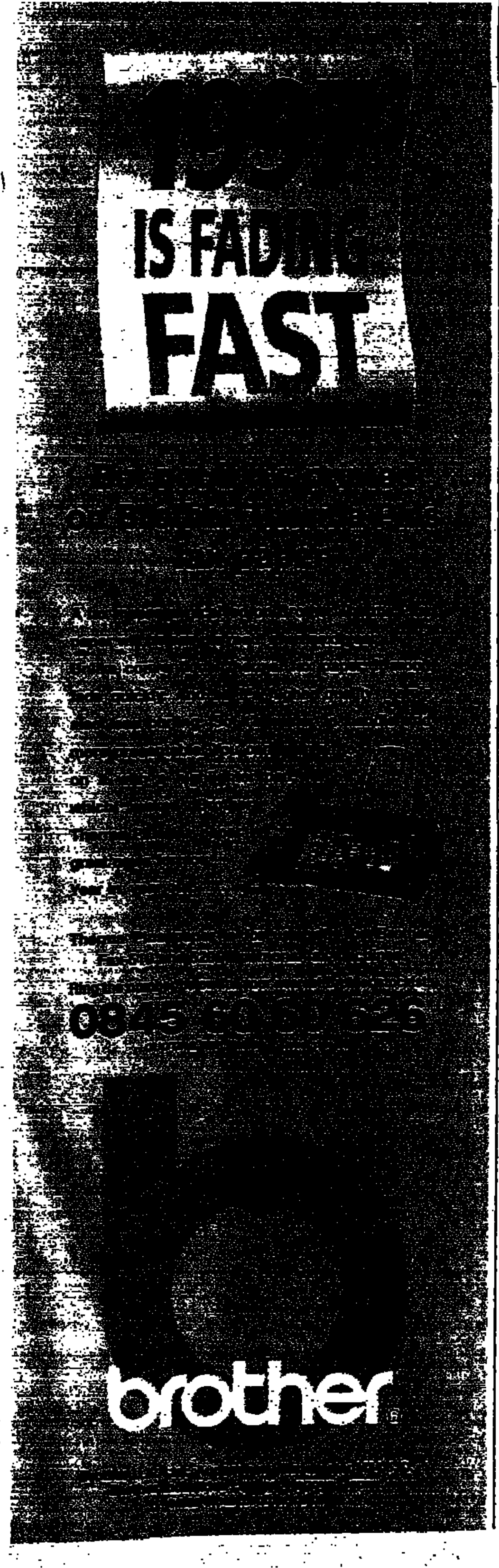
Mr Branson said: "Maybe they are trying to tell us something. Maybe we should launch from Algeria next time."

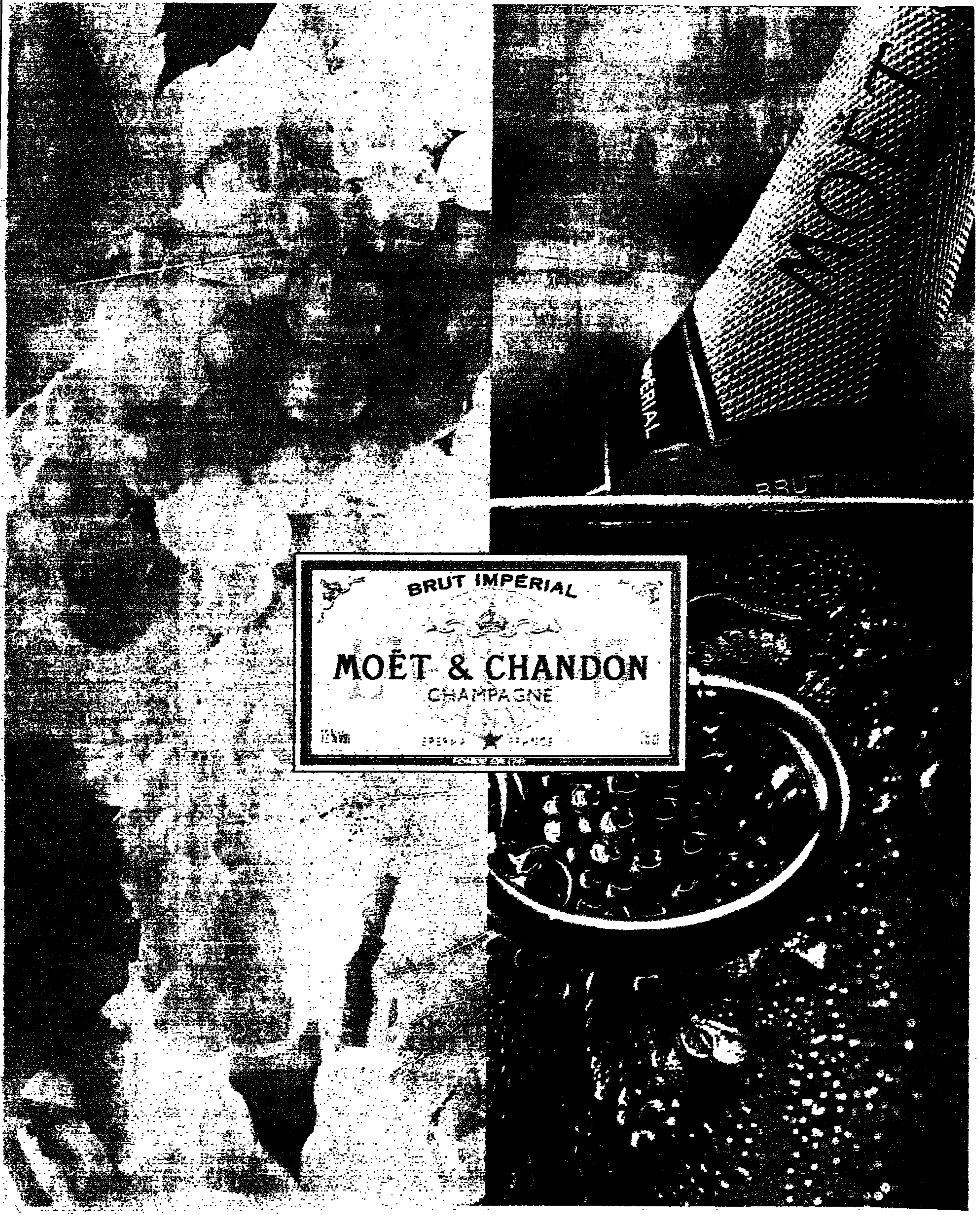
Branson undeflated, page 21

PETER NICHOLLS



Virgin Global Challenger where it fell in the Sahara, 35 miles inside Algeria. Engineers hope the sandy landing saved it from damage





— *Moët & Chandon. Turning nature into art* —

Saturday in THE TIMES

metro

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PLUS

WEEKEND

Time runs out for TV commentator

The inquiry into Hamilton Bland's alleged conflict of interest may be delayed again, reports **Craig Lord**

ASHLEY COOMBES

Mr Bland, who will be commentating on the swimming championships in Sheffield that begin today

HAMILTON BLAND, the BBC's "Voice of Swimming", faces an ultimatum from investigators examining his alleged conflict of interest involving National Lottery money.

Unless he attends a hearing within a reasonable time, the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) will be asked to consider the report of an independent inquiry without his contribution. The ASA and Chris Smith, Secretary for Culture, Media and Sport, announced separate inquiries after an investigation in July by *The Times* and Granada Television's *World in Action*.

A dossier showed that Mr Bland had an official role with the ASA recommending which pools should receive lottery help, while also running a profitable business as a consultant to those wanting to secure lottery funding. Mr Bland will be working as a BBC commentator at the four-day British National Swimming Championships in Sheffield that begins today.

The ASA's inquiry is being conducted by Mark Gay, a partner for the City of London lawyers Herbert Smith, which specialises in sports law.

The inquiry's completion has now been delayed twice. Mr Gay had been due to report on November 22. But no date was fixed for Mr Bland's attendance, requiring a postponement until December 19. A letter from David Sparkes, ASA chief executive, to committee members and past presidents, seen by *The Times*, shows that another delay is expected. It states: "It has now become clear that Bland has requested further time in order to further fully prepare his response ... and that the earliest occasion that this can be dealt with will be early in the new year."

Mr Bland has been trying to secure conditions for his appearance. He sought to confine Mr Gay to a fixed set of questions, or to make a presentation himself rather than answer questions.

Mr Sparkes said he did not feel that Mr Bland had stalled the inquiry, and that some of Mr Gay's requests for information had gone too far. It is believed Mr Bland does not wish to answer any questions about his business affairs.

However, some of those issues are central to *The Times* investigation and the inquiries into Mr Bland's activities. The ASA inquiry has also been delayed because he is said to have been suffering from viral pneumonia, which led to two stays in hospital last month. "Hamilton Bland has been very ill and has not been able to attend the inquiry," Mr Sparkes said. Mr Bland recovered sufficiently by the last week of November to get permission from a doctor to travel to the United States on a tour of swimming pools.

The likelihood of Mr Gay reporting before the annual meeting of the ASA's ruling council in February looks slim: the world championships take place in Australia in January, with those involved not returning to Britain until the last week of the month.

Mr Gay said: "I am still in negotiations with Mr Bland over the terms for his giving evidence to the inquiry. I've completed all other aspects of the inquiry. It's just a matter of seeing him. Once we get to interview him, the report should follow very soon after."

The bill for the inquiry is believed to be running well into six figures. Norman Sarsfield, a past president of the ASA, who was honorary secretary of the European Swimming League for 20 years, said: "This has gone on long enough."

Mr Smith will consider Mr Gay's final report as part of his own inquiries. He will refer the case to the Director of Public Prosecutions if allegations are substantiated.

Evolution clue from the find that time forgot

SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE story of evolution has been pushed back by almost 60 million years after analysis of fossils found on the Inner Hebridean isle of Islay. They contain the oldest animal droppings in the world.

Martin Brasier, of Oxford University, and Duncan McIlroy, of Liverpool University, claim the fossils show that animals with a mouth and gut existed 600 million years ago. Evolutionary theories had suggested a date of 540 million years ago.

Dr Brasier found the fossils 18 years ago during a visit to Scotland, but admits that he put them in a drawer and "basically forgot about them". It was not until they were spotted by Dr McIlroy two years ago that they decided to study them further for a written paper on them, which has just been completed.

The fossilised dung, made up of five oval pellets lying in a curved chain each measuring 2mm wide and 4mm long, was found in sedimentary rocks and is thought to have come from a 10cm worm.

Dr Brasier said yesterday: "This overturns previous theories that only jellyfish-type animals were around at that time." The development of the gut, which allowed food to pass through the body, was "a huge evolutionary leap".

Dr McIlroy said: "It was a marine worm, because the area where it was found would have been a shallow tidal lagoon about 5m deep. We believe they developed because there were great changes in the climate and in the creation of mountains. That released nutrients which washed down into rivers and lakes and boosted the growth of plants, which in turn increased photosynthesis and the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere. The extra oxygen allowed a burst in growth of animals."

Until now, more complex creatures capable of producing dung chains were thought to have emerged about 540 million years ago, with the evolution of invertebrates such as shrimps and centipedes.

The discovery is revealed in the latest edition of *The Geological Society Journal*. Experts reacted with excitement. Neil Clark, a palaeontologist at the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, said that although the public might not find dung fossils as exciting as the skeletons of "dangerous dinosaurs with big teeth", in scientific terms this particular find was highly significant.

Police accost killers in restaurant

BY PAUL WILKINSON

FOUR off-duty policemen eating in a Chinese restaurant were called by waiters to tackle three armed men in the kitchen as one of the owners lay dying in the yard from a shotgun wound.

The officers used chairs as shields as two of the masked men threatened them with a machete and a knife, but when the third aimed a sawn-off shotgun at them they dived for cover.

Eight other diners in the restaurant at Headingley, Leeds, on Tuesday evening hid behind parked cars. The gang fled in a stolen BMW driven by a fourth man.

West Yorkshire Police said yesterday: "The words 'This is a robbery' were used, but we are not closing our minds to other alternatives." They declined to comment on whether there might be Triad or gambling links.

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Industrial countries agree to cut carbon gas

FROM NICK NUTTALL IN KYOTO

INDUSTRIAL nations yesterday adopted a protocol that will legally bind them to cut emissions of greenhouse gases by 6 per cent between 2008 and 2012.

Last night, after ten days of tortuous negotiations at the world climate confrence in Japan, delegations were still wrangling over the fine print of the agreement. When it is finally rubber stamped, it will require countries to keep on raising their reduction targets into the 21st century, culminating in a 60 per cent cut in greenhouse gases.

Green groups were dismayed at the low targets and what they claim are a string of loopholes that will allow big polluting nations such as the United States to continue to emit huge amounts of the carbon gases that are linked to global warming.

However, John Gummer, the former Environment Minister and a member of the British delegation to the conference, said: "This is not what we might have hoped for. But it is a reasonable beginning."

Scientists advising the 160 nations that make up the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change estimate that the 60 per cent cut is needed to keep global warming within levels that natural biological systems can tolerate.

The treaty allows for controversial trading mechanisms, including joint implementation (JI), which the Americans said was crucial to any agreement. It will allow an industrialised nation to sign a deal with another industrialised country, and more importantly so-called economies in transition, such as those in the former Soviet block, to carry out "carbon mitigation" schemes.

JI projects could include building a clean power station to replace a dirty one, or planting trees to soak up carbon dioxide. Under JI, the rich country providing the clean technology could offset its carbon pollution against the savings made overseas.

Other schemes include "carbon trading", whereby factories in industrial countries with rising emissions, such as America, will be able to buy carbon credits from factories in other industrial countries that have reduced their emissions. Critics fear that America, for example, will try to buy cheap credits from Russia whose pollution levels have collapsed along with its economy. Countries will also be able to offset emissions using "sinks". These are features, such as forests, that absorb carbon gases.

In order to reach agreement on the protocol, delegates and ministers, including John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, had less than an hour's sleep during the 48 hours they spent trying to thrash out the details.

Warming to change, page 22

KATSUMI KASAHARA

A delegate to the Kyoto climate conference takes the chance to catch up on some sleep as the negotiations to reach an agreement drag on

Algae may be used to devour pollutants

BY NICK NUTTALL

THE use of super algae that can soak up carbon dioxide and fuel additives in aircraft fumes is one of the "techno-fixes" being studied to tackle global warming.

Ben Mathews, of the University of East Anglia in Norwich, told the conference: "It's a great idea. Oil and coal companies make money polluting the planet and then make money out of finding technological fixes."

The researcher, an expert on ocean algae, likened climate engineering to putting the planet on a dialysis machine. One idea involved bubbling CO_2 from power stations into the sea and sinking it on the ocean floor to lock it away. Another involved cooling CO_2 into a liquid or into "dry ice pellets" for burial on the sea bed.

But Mr Mathews said there would be a constant fear that alterations in ocean circulation brought about by climate change might bring the pollution back as "giant gas bubbles".

Unauthorised mock Tudor homes can stay

BY PAUL WHITTAKER

A COUNCIL reluctantly decided yesterday not to order the removal of mock Tudor frontages added by Barratt Homes to new houses without planning permission.

The company added the wooden cladding to the front of the £70,000 homes on the Barlborough Links Estate near Chesterfield, Derbyshire, even though planners had rejected the design.

Bolsover District Council's decision was a relief for 11 families who had faced the prospect of having to tear down timber from the front of their three-bedroom houses if the council had issued enforcement orders. Scott Chambers, the council's public relations officer, said that the planning committee did not consider that Barratt's Tudor frontages suited the estate, which bordered a conservation area. "They [Barratt] came back with new designs but went ahead and put the Tudor cladding up anyway, in defiance of the council."

Eion Watts, the council's deputy leader, said that even though Barratt had blatantly ignored the planning process, the council had decided against persecuting homeowners who had bought the properties in good faith.

A Barratt Group spokesman yesterday blamed human error for the blunder. "We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused. The difficulty was caused by an internal error."

But Mr Watts said that the company's excuse was not convincing and called for government action to tighten planning regulations. He said: "They went through a detailed planning process. They knew that design was not allowed and showed contempt for the planning process.

"Barratt puts houses up all over the place — it knows the rules. All this shows is that the rules of planning are a joke and the Government needs to have a good look at the problem." He added that the council had not objected to the design or style of the homes but to the principle of a company overriding a planning authority. He said the council had received no complaints about the look of the homes, and other residents were probably unaware of the dispute.

"The point is they put up a standard design that totally ignored the planning permission for the site. If Joe Public can abide by the rules, a national builder should have to as well."

Barratt was given planning approval in early 1996 for 101 houses on the planned 450-home estate. The company offered to rectify the problem at no cost to the homeowners but the occupiers were happy with the design.

> ‘If Joe Public can abide by the rules, so should a builder’

Leading article, page 23

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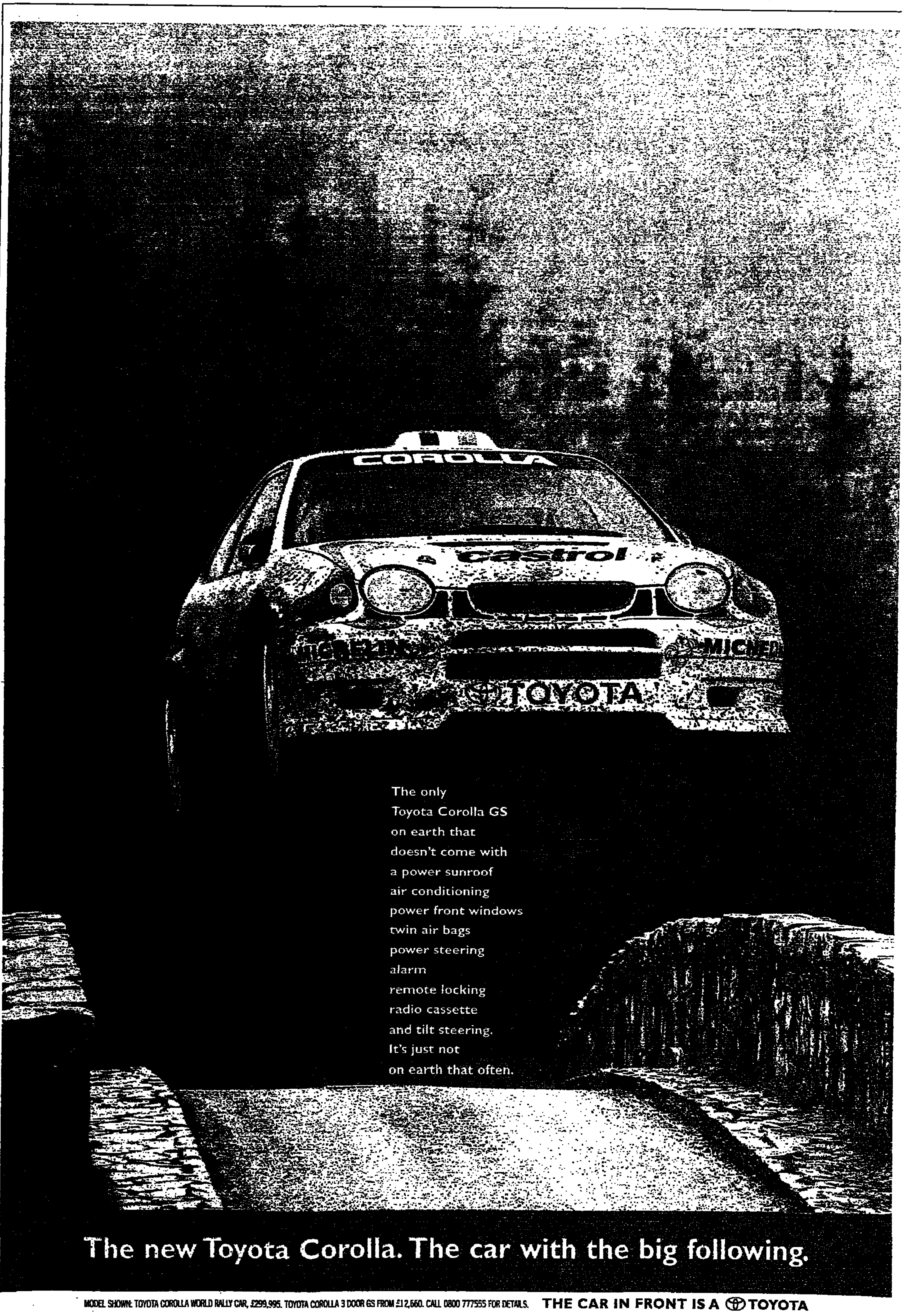

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Sponsors take over ITV's festive season

Raymond Snoddy on a Panasonic Christmas and a Toyota New Year

ITV viewers will find it hard to escape sponsored programmes over the festive season. Panasonic has signed a deal for Christmas week and Toyota has bought New Year.

The idea of letting companies sponsor a series of programmes during a special season is likely to spread. ITV is looking for sponsors to take on Mother's Day, Valentine's Day and Hallowe'en.

Panasonic has signed a £500,000 deal to sponsor three or four programmes a day over Christmas week, a crucial sales period. On Christmas Day, it will sponsor four programmes, including the films *Honey I Shrunk The Kids* and *Father Christmas and the Missing Reindeer*. This is the largest number of sponsored programmes on ITV on a Christmas Day.

Russell Simkins, general manager for Panasonic UK, said that the credits would reflect "Christmas with the family" and was the "right vehicle for us to increase awareness of the Panasonic brand".

Toyota has signed a five-year sponsorship deal for £18 million, which ties up New Year's Eve and New Year's Day through the Millennium. The car giant will be putting up a massive promotion for its new Avensis. Between 10.30am on December 31 and midnight on January 1, 19 programmes on ITV will be sponsored — a total of 32½ hours. News and current affairs are excluded, as they cannot be sponsored.

Six sets of sponsorship films are being created for Toyota, to be shown in sequence over the two days. As part of the deal, Toyota will be sponsoring ITV's Movie Premieres for three years, involving about 40 films. Toyota Motability, the company's programme to provide cars for disabled drivers, will sponsor all 38 programmes next year of ITV's disability programme *Link*.

John Hardie, ITV's commercial and marketing director, said that the Toyota deal broke new ground for ITV sponsorship as "the most diverse, largest and longest future investment ever negotiated by any UK network, satellite or terrestrial".

The biggest individual sponsorship deal in ITV is Cadbury's £10 million a year sponsorship of Coronation Street. Sponsorship brings in about £40 million a year. *David Prosser, head of sponsorship at Carlton, said: "It has still got a long way to go yet."*

Evans in £30m Channel 4 deal

Jackson: new schedule

CHRIS EVANS has signed a reported £30 million three-year contract with Channel 4 to help to bankroll his purchase of Virgin Radio, it emerged yesterday (Carol Midgley writes).

Michael Jackson, chief executive of the television channel, said a deal was struck last week — days before Mr Evans bought Virgin Radio for £80 million — to provide Channel 4 with 42 *TFI Friday* shows each year up to 2001.

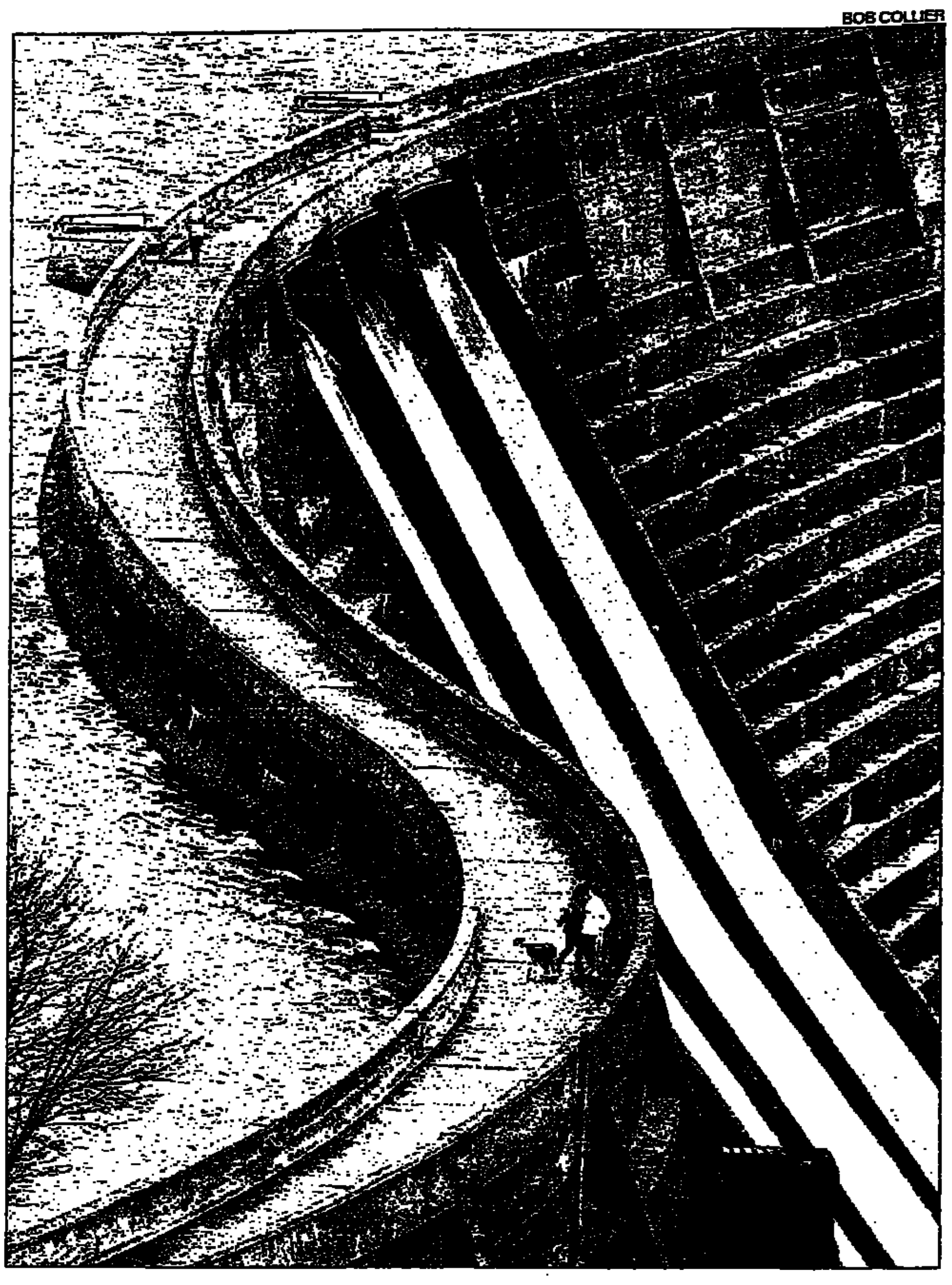
Mr Jackson said Mr Evans was important for the youth audience of Channel 4. "Chris is someone who's going to be with us for many years to come. People haven't loaned him tens of millions of pounds on the basis that he's going to burn out tomorrow."

At the launch of Channel 4's winter schedule, Mr Jackson disclosed that the *Comic Strip* team — Adrian Edmonson, Rik Mayall, Jennifer Saunders and Dawn French — would reform for a new programme, *Four Men in a Car*.

There will be a dramatisation of the life of Sir Oswald Mosley, starring Jonathan Cake, Jemma Redgrave and Emma Davies. *Father Ted* is back for a third series. *Brookside* gets another five-night special, and the fourth series of *ER* will get its first airing on terrestrial television in the new year.

Two new sitcoms are promised: *In Exile*, about a former African tyrant who sees his powers reduced in London, and *Slap!* about the make-up counter in a Manchester department store.

BOB COLLIER



Water overflowing from Baitings Dam, near Ripponden, West Yorkshire, yesterday. Two years ago the 135ft dam was almost empty, but some of the heaviest downpours of the winter yesterday reversed the situation. Most of Britain was lashed with heavy rain, with more than two inches falling in Snowdonia. Forecast, page 26

Princess's fund gets £20m from rock star

ELTON JOHN yesterday handed a cheque for £20 million to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund as the first instalment of proceeds from the sale of his number-one hit *Candle in the Wind '97*.

The cheque was presented to Lady Sarah McCorquodale, the Princess's sister, and the fund's other trustees at Kensington Palace.

The song, with new words for the Princess by the lyricist Bernie Taupin, has sold 33 million copies worldwide and a further £10 million is expected to be handed over in the next few weeks.

In just five weeks, the song — sung by Elton John at the Princess's funeral in Westminster Abbey — outsold Bing Crosby's record-breaking *White Christmas*, which has sold 30 million in 55 years. The fund is on course to raise more than £100 million for charities linked to the Princess.

The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, chairman of the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Committee, was also present. He said: "I am delighted that, owing to the unique success of Elton's record, the Government will be donating more than £2.5 million, equivalent to the VAT paid by people who have bought the record, to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund."

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Nostalgia drive rallies old cars

By Kevin Eason
Motoring Editor

The 2CV: sold 7 million since its launch in 1948

IT LOOKED like a tin shack on wheels and carted more brown rice around Britain than any other car but now the 2CV is to make a comeback.

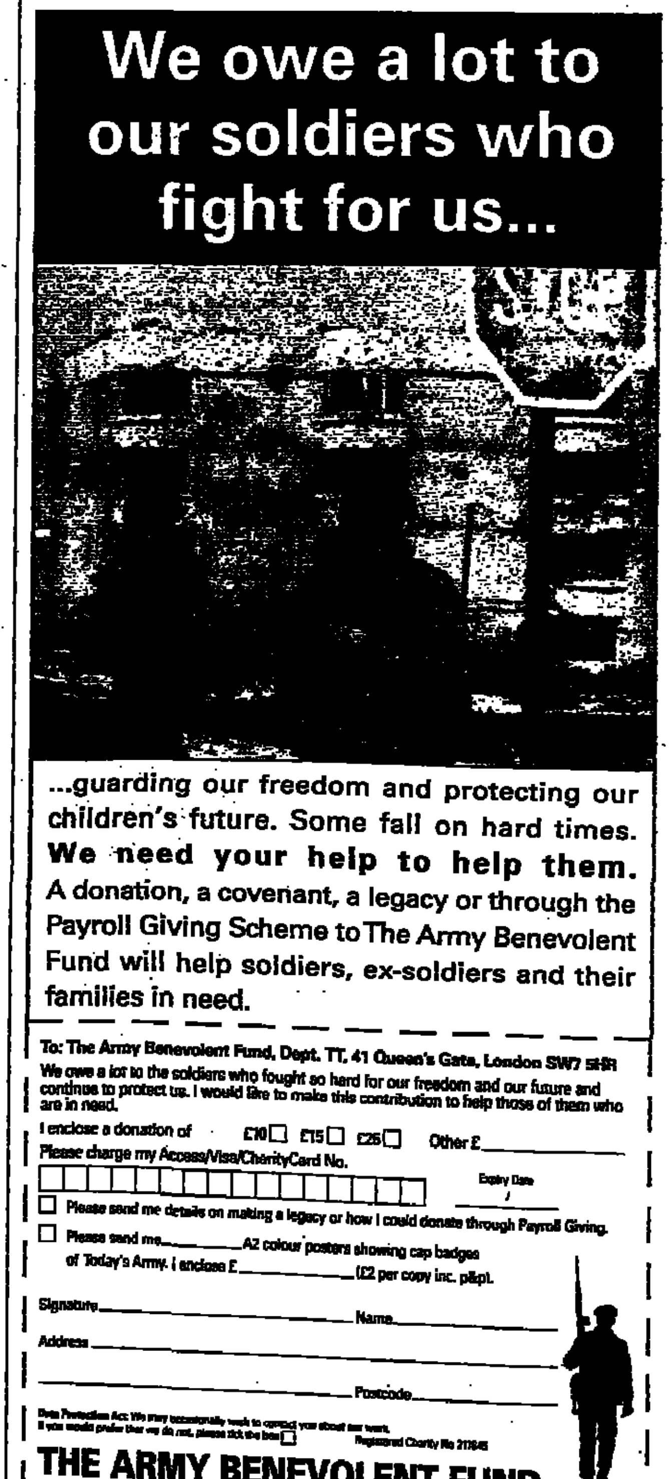
Citroën has ordered designers to come up with a new version of its bestselling model for the next century as carmakers increasingly rifle through their family albums to revive old favourites.

Next month Volkswagen will reveal the shape of its new Beetle, a reincarnation of the people's car ordered by Hitler which sold more than 21 million worldwide. The new car might have curved bumpers and wings and a more advanced engine but it will clearly be a descendant of the Beetle designed in 1934 by Ferdinand Porsche.

Designs for the new Mini have been scaled down by Rover from futuristic concept versions into a shape closer to Sir Alec Issigonis's original 1950s design.

Citroën is hoping to recreate some of the charm of the 2CV, more than 7 million of which were sold, making it one of the bestselling models on record. The 2CV, launched in 1948, was conceived for simplicity: it was to be easy to repair, roomy enough for livestock, yet comfortable enough to take children to school.

It became a favourite in Britain in the 1970s and 1980s, acquiring an environmentally friendly image. Ironically, the model was killed off in 1990 because its engine could not meet new emissions legislation. Moreover, it was regularly deemed one of the least safe cars in accident statistics published by the Department of Transport.



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We have to take risks for peace, Mowlam insists

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

THE Northern Ireland Secretary has admitted on the eve of Gerry Adams's visit to Downing Street today that she would "look a fool" if the IRA returns to violence, and that her position could become untenable.

But Mo Mowlam insisted that she had to take that risk if the peace process was to succeed.

Dr Mowlam said she had to work on the assumption that Sinn Fein was a participant in good faith at the Stormont talks. The alternative was inevitable failure.

Of the possibility of the IRA breaking its ceasefire, she said: "If I worried about that, then I would not take risks and I would be super-cautious and I would assume it's going to fail and I would act accordingly and it would . . . If I end up in six months' time having failed then I can just know that I did everything that I possibly could to make it work."

Mr Adams, Martin McGuinness and five colleagues will arrive at Downing Street at 2pm, and the world's media will witness the arresting sight of No 10's front door swinging open to admit Irish republican leaders into the British Establishment's innermost sanctum for the first time in 76 years.

The meeting comes six years after the IRA fired three mortars at Downing Street, six months after it murdered two policemen in Lurgan, and six days after the BBC named Mr Adams, Mr McGuinness and a third member of the delegation, Martin Ferris, as members of the IRA's army council.

Conservatives and Ulster Unionists have denounced the invitation as dangerously premature, a moral obscenity and a propaganda bonanza for unreformed killers. They say the IRA has surrendered not a bullet or ounce of Semtex, and that Sinn Fein has not earned the legitimacy that Tony Blair will confer on it.

"People tell me, 'You're being taken for a ride, you're naive, they're not serious,'" said Dr Mowlam in her office in Stormont. "All I would say to that is that if that assumption is right and I respond accordingly then it's a self-fulfilling prophecy — it will fail. While if I assume the opposite then it will reinforce the peace process that's working now."

So far, she had no reason to doubt Sinn Fein's sincerity. The party had "delivered" on the ceasefire and its adoption of the Mitchell principles of democracy and non-violence. Had she added other conditions there might not have been a ceasefire.

Sinn Fein's contribution to the talks had been "as positive as anyone else's — they have turned up, participated, written papers". In return, the Government had to treat it the same as all the other participating parties.

To relatives of IRA victims who might find today's meeting distressing she suggested that including, not excluding, Sinn Fein was the best way to prevent further killing. "No one is setting out to make their pain worse but if we can stop another life being lost, then what we're doing this week is important."

She had "no time" for her Tory critics. Conservative governments held secret meetings with Sinn Fein but Mr Blair's was doing it openly. In any case, she added: "We can't say we expect all the parties in the talks to talk to them and we're not going to. That would be the height of hypocrisy."

Ulster Unionist Party MPs met Dr Mowlam yesterday to complain that she was making constant concessions to Sinn Fein. But she suggested the net result of Sinn Fein's equal treatment and her reforms would be to deny Mr Adams's party and the IRA any legitimacy whatsoever if they broke the ceasefire. "They get nothing if they return to violence," she said. In the past, republican sympathisers, especially Americans, had blamed the British, but "this time is different . . . No one can say we have been the problem this time."

KELVIN BOYES

Mo Mowlam, who remains resolute about Gerry Adams's visit to No 10 today

Orange HQ is seized in protest at 'betrayal' by leadership

HARDLINE members of the Orange Order seized its Belfast headquarters yesterday in a rebellion with ominous implications for the peace process (Martin Fletcher writes).

Accusing the Order's moderate leadership of "betrayal" for agreeing to re-route several contentious parades in the summer, hundreds of rank-and-file Orangemen occupied the offices before a meeting at which Robert Saulters, its Grand Master, was seeking re-election. They demanded an open election by the Order's estimated 40,000 members. The meeting had to be switched to an Orange Hall on the Shankill Road, where Mr Saulters was returned unopposed, but the rebels claimed the unannounced change of venue made his election illegal.

The rebellion underscored the dangers of compromise for any Orange Order or Unionist leader. It will also make it harder for the Order's leadership to show flexibility over next year's marching season.

The predominantly loyalist parades, some of which proceed through nationalist areas, are a source of intense friction between Northern Ireland's two traditions, although most of the thousands that take place each year pass off without trouble. Loyalists regard their parades as legitimate expressions of their heritage, but some nationalists consider them to be provocatively triumphalist.

The Orange rebels were members of the Spirit of Drumcree group, named after the confrontation last year when, in a stand-off with police, Orangemen gathered to insist that the Protestant marchers be allowed to proceed down the Garvaghy Road, Portadown, despite the opposition of its Roman Catholic residents.

Yesterday morning about 300 rebels joined the 100 or so who had occupied the Order's Belfast headquarters overnight. There were scuffles and angry scenes as official delegates arriving from across the Province were denied entry.

Joel Patton, the group's leader, said his followers would no longer tolerate "the betrayal of the institution as was displayed by the surrender of many traditional parades last summer", or the leadership's election by an unrepresentative clique. "Something historic has happened. Ordinary Orangemen have spoken and they have got to be listened to," he said.

Jeffrey Donaldson, the Ulster Unionist Party MP who is retiring as the Order's Deputy Grand Master, said he feared "a very serious split within the Orange Order". Martin Smyth, another UUP MP and a former Grand Master, accused the rebels of "mob law". Other delegates demanded their expulsion.

Adams aims to settle some 'unfinished business' 76 years on

Lloyd George: delight over the treaty

By Martin Fletcher

GERRY ADAMS says he is is going to No 10 today to conclude "unfinished business". His reference is to Michael Collins, the last Irish republican leader to visit Downing Street, and his failed efforts 76 years ago to secure an Ireland that was not only independent but united.

For nearly two years Collins and his fledgling IRA had waged a guerrilla war against the British forces in Ireland. The infamous Black and Tans fought back with equal savagery. In July 1921, after 2,000 deaths, a truce was called as a prelude to peace negotiations. The Irish "plenipotentiaries", minus Collins, arrived at Euston Station on Sunday, October 8, and were welcomed by a pipe band and a large crowd of compatriots. But outside their rented headquarters in Hans Place, Knightsbridge, someone had painted the words "Collins the Murderer". Indeed, the Big Fellow, as Collins was known, had only recently been relieved of a £10,000 reward on his head.

Collins, 29 and newly engaged to Kitty Kiernan, slipped into London unnoticed on the Monday morning and was soon complaining about newspapers fabricating interviews with him. At 11am on the Tuesday he and his team arrived at No 10 where David Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, met them at the door of the conference room.

Lloyd George led the Irish delegates straight to their places on one side of the table so that his colleagues would not have to shake their hands. Those colleagues comprosed a formidable team, including Winston Churchill, the Colonial Secretary; Lord Birkenhead, the Lord Chancellor; and Sir Austen Chamberlain, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The ensuing negotiations lasted nearly two months. Collins, once branded the archetypal terrorist, attended early-morning Mass at Brompton Oratory each day and was enthusiastically embraced by English society. *Tatler* magazine asked him to sit for a portrait, and Sir James Barrie, the author, became a particular friend.

The Anglo-Irish Treaty was finally signed in Downing Street at 2.20am on December 6. It fell far short of Irish aspirations. Its effect was to give 26 of Ireland's 32 counties dominion status like that of Canada or Australia, and to seal the partition of the predominantly Protestant north from the Catholic south.

Collins, faced with a return to war, felt the treaty was the best he could achieve. He hoped he could sell it in Dublin as a stepping stone to full independence, but confided to Lord Birkenhead that night that "I may have signed my death warrant".

His words were prophetic. The treaty was narrowly ratified by the Dail but it split the IRA and the Irish Civil War erupted in June 1922. Two months later Collins was ambushed and killed by Eamon de Valera's anti-treaty "Irregulars" in Co Cork.

Lloyd George was delighted with the treaty, believing he had finally solved the Irish problem that had bedevilled his predecessors. He was spectacularly wrong, and Tony Blair is still grappling with that problem hundreds of lost lives later.

Collins: feared he had signed his death warrant

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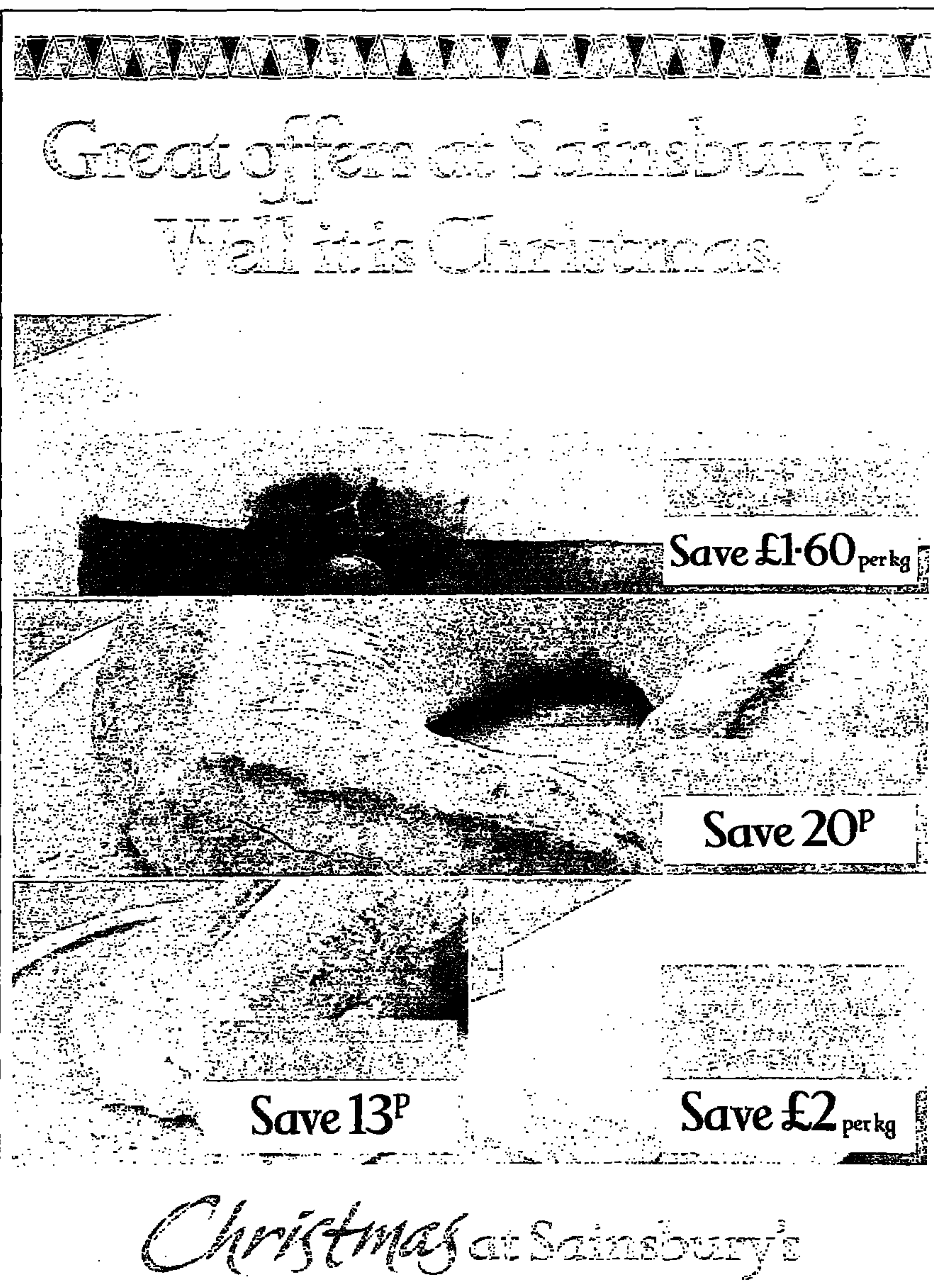

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Blair attacked by MPs from all parties

James Landale and **Polly Newton** on how the critics put their case in the debate on single-parent benefit cuts

TONY BLAIR came under fire from all sides of the Commons yesterday over the Government's plans to cut benefits for single parents.

The Prime Minister was asked by **Diane Abbott** (Lab. Hackney North and Stoke Newington), a leading left-winger on Labour's national executive, how he could justify the cuts.

Speaking during Prime Minister's Questions, Ms Abbott said: "Will you accept that even if the new deal for lone parents is 100 per cent successful, there will always be women, particularly mothers with children under five, who are not able to work? How do you justify cutting those women's benefits?"

Mr Blair insisted that single parents already on benefit would not face any cuts. "I have to say to you very frankly indeed: we were elected as a Government because people believed we would keep a tight control on public finance and because we said clearly before the election — and I repeat again now — that what is important is to get as many people as possible off benefit and into work.

"They need the chance to get into work and we will help them do so. And with the greatest respect to you, I think that is a better way of achieving our aims."

William Hague challenged Mr Blair to say whether he was imposing the cuts because he opposed discrimination against married couples or because he wanted to save money. The Tory leader said: "The Opposition will support the Government tonight since we believe that married couples should not be discriminated against by the benefits system. Can I ask you personally whether you believe in that principle?"

Mr Blair replied: "What I believe is that within the choice of priorities available to us, helping lone parents off benefit and into work is the best thing that we can do for them. That's why we have a package worth £200 million specifically for lone parents."

Mr Hague asked: "Why didn't you have the courage to say this to people before the election?" Mr Blair replied: "You are simply wrong. It was made clear before the election that we would stick within the existing budgets, but we did say what's important is to give lone parents the chance to get off benefit and into work."

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said his party agreed with the Government about the need to break dependency and providing childcare facilities for parents who want to work. But he asked: "Why does this have to be paid for by single parents who have to stay at home? Do you not realise that people are simply bewildered as to why a Labour Government should chose to ask the poor to pay for the poor while those who are the rich are able to continue to duck their taxes?"

Abbott: Question Time challenge for Blair

During the subsequent debate on the Social Security Bill, **Audrey Wise** (Lab. Preston) said the benefit cut was "a clear disincentive" to single parents to seek work. If they were considering taking a job that might not be permanent, they would have to return to a lower rate of benefit if they became unemployed again.

Mrs Wise said most lone parents were not young and feckless but had suffered the breakdown of a marriage. "But suppose there is a mother who is young, reckless and feckless — is she going to be a better mother by making her poorer?"

Mrs Wise said she did not criticise single parents who wanted to go out to work. "I do criticise an attitude that says all parents of small children chould be willing to go to work cleaning or shelf filling and leaving their chidlren with somebody else."

She said that children would suffer as a result of the cut. "I believe that there is no excuse for removing a penny from any lone parent ... These measures are not in accord with Labour values and they are not economically necessary."

Clive Soley (Lab. Ealing, Acton and Shephards Bush), chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, urged Labour MPs to support the Government. He admitted that there would be "some potential losers" from the benefit cuts.

But he emphasised that ministers had made a concession to "keep the matter under review" and insisted that the cuts should be seen in the context of the Government's wider welfare state reforms. "Don't lose sight on the long term vision," he said. "Don't lose your heads."

Children playing outside Parliament as their mothers mounted a demonstration against the benefit cuts

Ken Livingstone (Lab, Brent East) said had not heard anything to persuade him to support the Government. He said there cannot have been anybody on the Labour benches in favour of this policy before the election. "When I went to see Ms Harman she made it absolutely clear she wasn't in favour of it," he said.

"I have the horrible feeling what we are now about is demonstrating to the international markets that we can be as brutal on the poor as the Government we have replaced. I feel ashamed of what we are doing."

Alice Mahon (Lab, Halifax) said she would not be voting for the Government. "Tonight I am going to vote for the family." She said single-parent families already lived on the margins of society and would be hit further by the cuts. "I think there is something rather punitive and cruel about these cuts."

She said that if the new deal proposals to get single parents into work became compulsory, as many Labour MPs believed, "it would be a piece of social engineering that Stalin would be proud of".

Out of a job and into the limelight

By Polly Newton

MALCOLM CHISHOLM, the junior Scottish Office Minister who resigned yesterday in protest at the Government's implentation of the Tories' cut in lone parent benefit, is not a man accustomed to the limelight.

As news of his decision spread around Westminster, even some seasoned political observers struggled to put a face to the name. His low profile is reflected in various descriptions — among them "quietly efficient", "low key" and "cautious" — that have been applied by colleagues and commentators.

Mr Chisholm, 48, is MP for Edinburgh North and Leith. As the Scottish Office Minister for Local Government, Housing and Transport, he was accused of hypocrisy by Tory opponents who reminded him that he had

MAN IN THE NEWS

described as "rotten" last year's financial settlement for Scotland under the Conservatives. As a result of Labour's promise to stick to Conservative spending plans, he was forced to defend the budget in Government although it was almost unchanged.

He was one of a handful of Labour's 1992 intake to join the left-wing Campaign Group, and in 1994 he signed a Commons motion calling for the scrapping of the Trident nuclear missile programme, against policy.

His appointment to the front bench by Tony Blair may have demonstrated the Prime Minister's desire to balance left and right in his ministerial team, but it was also the direct result of a resignation. Mr Chisholm was appointed as Labour's spokesman on local government in June 1996 after Jim McAllion, MP for Dundee East, stood down in protest at Mr Blair's decision to promise a referendum on a tax-raising Scottish Parliament.

Although Mr Chisholm was a staunch supporter of the campaign for that parliament, he is vehemently opposed to nationalism.

Inevitable revolt will have little lasting effect

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

THE Blair Government has at last come of age — its first ministerial resignation, the departure of some parliamentary private secretaries and the first full-scale Commons revolt. And not before time. Labour MPs have been forced to come to terms with the substance, as well as the rhetoric, of what "new" Labour means.

All governments with big majorities face revolts, usually sooner rather than later. The very size of majorities means that revolts are larger than they otherwise would be. There are few risks. Rebels have a partially free ride. There are consequences — as some parliamentary private secretaries found last night. But there is no danger of either threatening the specific proposal or the Government's broader political position.

For instance, within months of Labour's landslide victory in 1945, 23 Labour MPs voted against the Attlee Government that December on the key issue of post-war financial arrangements and the new Bretton Woods system. In 1966, 32 Labour MPs abstained in July on a vote on the Government's attitude to American policy in Vietnam, while a few weeks later 27 MPs abstained on the proposals establishing a statutory prices and incomes policy, shortly after Frank Cousins had resigned from the Cabinet.

These were all far bigger issues than last night's measure. The paradoxical feature of the cut in lone-parent benefit is the thinness of the Government's case on its specific merits. There will be a relatively small cash saving, at least in the short term, and the cut does not strengthen incentives to work. By affecting low-paid single parents in work, it may even discourage those seeking jobs.

The original argument for the change introduced by the Tories before the general election was to equalise treatment with married people, though the main case advanced now by ministers — and by Clive Soley, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, in last night's debate — was that it should be seen as merely one part of a much wider Welfare to Work programme

But the debate is really less about these specific arguments than the broader questions of welfare and public spending strategy. It has become a symbol of the Government's determination to press ahead with what ministers often describe as "tough" choices on welfare reform and to stick to tough public spending targets.

Having set its policy, it has become almost a macho test of its determination. There has been little patience in Downing Street with the dissenters.

The impact will be far less than the sensational immediate headlines about resignations and the biggest revolt of the Parliament. Such events have often occurred in the past, and are usually soon forgotten. They seldom have any effect on the Government's broader legislative programme.

There are two uncertainties. First, will last night's arguments have a souring effect within the Parliamentary Labour Party? Many MPs who backed the Government did so reluctantly and unhappily. They want to see more evidence of the Government's commitment to help the less well-off.

Secondly, will the Government itself now become more cautious about other changes to benefits? If ministers do not see off their critics on a relatively minor issue like single-parent benefits, what chance do they have on the far bigger decisions coming up on student fees and possible later welfare changes and cutbacks in universal benefits.

The Blair Government has so far had a remarkably smooth ride, with just mutterings of dissent from the old Left. That could not last, and never has under any previous reforming administration. Last night's revolt marks a shift in mood, and an overdue dose of political reality.

PETER RIDDELL

London's assembly 'should raise funds'

By Mark Henderson

THE Treasury should allow the London-wide authority proposed by the Government to set its own budget and raise revenue, a pro-Labour think-tank said yesterday.

A study by the centre-left Institute for Public Policy Research recommended that the Greater London Authority be allowed to raise its own funds with transport-related charges and a voluntary business levy. The Treasury is pressing for a ban on all independent fundraising powers for the authority in the White Paper to be published next April, which will be put to Londoners in a referendum in May.

The Government made clear in a July Green Paper that the London authority would not have tax-raising powers, but left open the possibility of allowing it other sources of independent funding. The IPPR report suggests road pricing, congestion charges, parking fares and fees charged to utilities for digging up roads should all be available. The Treasury is anxious to block even these to limit the assembly's power.

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Irvine seeks to improve 'living wills' option

Frances Gibb on plans to clarify the law giving people a say in future healthcare

LEGAL reforms proposed yesterday would give people clearer rights to say in advance what medical treatment they would accept if they became too ill to decide at the time.

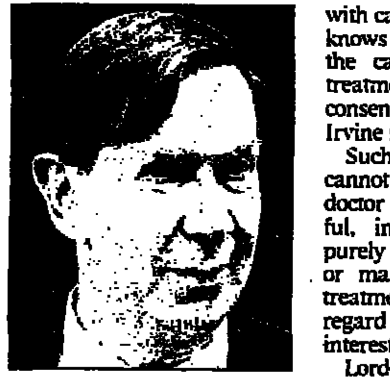
Through "living wills" they would be able to appoint someone with a continuing power of attorney to deal with their personal and healthcare matters in the way that they can now for arrangements concerning property and finance.

The proposals, published yesterday by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, would enable a relative or other appointed person to be given wide powers to make decisions on a range of issues for those who become mentally incapable, spanning the withdrawal of life-prolonging treatment to using their money.

At the same time, there would be a new offence for a carer to ill-treat or wilfully neglect a person they had care of or whose property they controlled.

The aim is to reform the law to give better protection to people who are mentally incapable and to their carers. But the consultation paper issued by his department, *Who Decides?*, makes clear that the Government is determined there should be no move towards the legalisation of euthanasia.

Lord Irvine told the Lords: "Euthanisa is a deliberate intervention undertaken with the express intenton of ending a life, at an individual's own request or for a merciful motive. The Government is absolutely opposed to euthanasia in any form."



Irvine: ruled out any move to euthanasia

The Lord Chancellor wants reforms to improve the law for people who are mentally incapacitated, whether through an accident or dementia. At present, the law is confusing and fragmented.

The Lord Chancellor's Department says: "Many carers in particular are expected to make decisions on behalf of incapacitated adults without a clear idea as to the legal authority for those decisions."

On "living wills", or advance statements, the Lord Chancellor made clear that it was wrong to suggest the proposals would introduce these for the first time. People can already make advance statements refusing medical treatment, which are legally binding, although they cannot make statements legally compelling doctors to provide certain medical treatment.

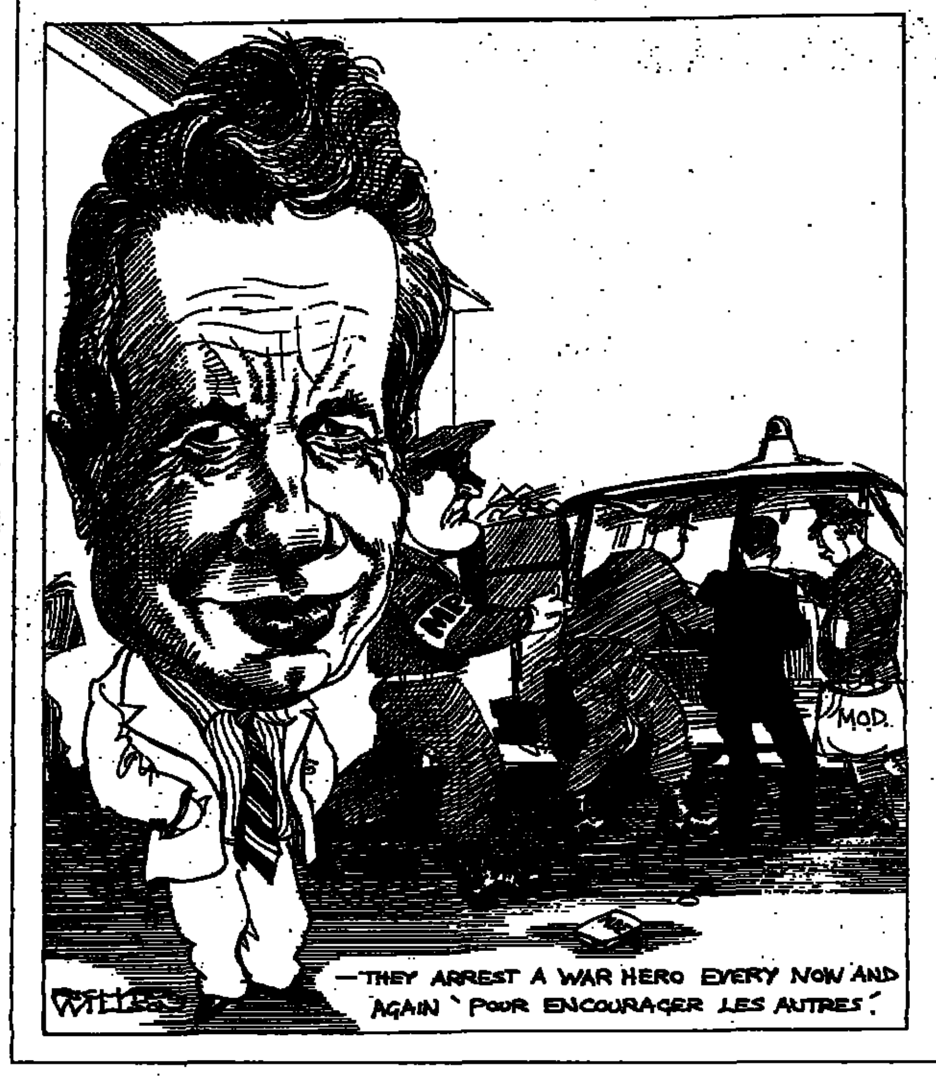
But the proposals would clarify the law and include safeguards to ensure that the statements are the result of an informed choice, free from undue influence. The "living wills" would allow a patient with cancer, for instance, who knows that he or she may lose the capacity to consent to treatment, to provide that consent in advance, Lord Irvine said.

Such advance statements cannot therefore require a doctor to do anything unlawful, including taking steps purely to end the patient's life, or make a doctor provivde treatment that he does not regard as in the patient's best interests.

Lord Irvine said: "The blunt truth is that if a doctor took such action [deliberately ending life] he would be exposed to a charge of murder."

The consultation paper is based on proposals made three years ago by the Law Commission of England and Wales. Better healthcare means that the number of people over 85 will rise by more than 30 per cent this decade, it says. It recommends a new test, in which anything done for another who is incapacitated should be in that person's best interests, subject to safeguards.

Powers to act on someone's behalf would not extend to decisions on marriage, divorce, sexual relations or voting, or to authorising the use, or threat, of force or the person's detention or confinement. The overriding principle is that people should be encouraged to make decisions they can make, including planning ahead for when they have lost the capacity to consent to, or refuse, medical treatment.



—THEY ARREST A WAR HERO EVERY NOW AND AGAIN 'POUR ENCOURAGER LES AUTRES'.

Bell condemns arrest of 'hero'

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

MARTIN BELL condemned yesterday the treatment of an army major alleged to have spied for the Serbs in Bosnia.

In a Commons debate, the independent MP and former war correspondent said that Major Milos Stankovic, of the Parachute Regiment, was a hero who had been unfairly treated by the Ministry of Defence police.

Major Stankovic, whose parents are Serbian, was a liaison officer between the UN headquarters and the Bosnian Serbs. He completed four tours of duty in Bosnia and was appointed an MBE. Mr Bell met him many times during television assignments there.

The officer was arrested by MoD police in October at his home in Farnham, Surrey, for alleged offences under the Official Secrets Act. He was later released on police bail. The MoD police have refused to give any details of the investigation.

Mr Bell told MPs that the major had rescued 50 Canadian peacekeepers during one tour of duty, and during another had saved the life of a Muslim woman injured by sniper fire. "What kind of a people are we, and what kind of a signal does it send, if we reward our heroes by arresting them? Heroes are ordinary people who do extraordinary things, and Major Milos Stankovic is such a man."

When Major Stankovic was arrested, Mr Bell said, he was not allowed to make a telephone call. The police had taken personal items from his flat in Farnham, including his medals, but had not provided an inventory. "He has been left to twist in the wind."

The MoD police investigation is continuing and Major Stankovic has not been charged with any offence. Mr Bell urged John Reid, the Armed Forces Minister, to ensure that the officer's rights were respected and that the case was concluded without delay.

Dr Reid would not comment on MoD procedures but said that Major Stankovic was being given the support of a senior officer as the inquiry progressed.

Major's alert on shift to the right

By James Landale, Political Reporter

JOHN MAJOR warned William Hague yesterday against shifting the Conservative Party to the right. The former Prime Minister also insisted that Peter Temple-Morris, the Europhile MP who recently crossed the floor to sit as an independent after having the Tory whip withdrawn, should still be welcome in the party.

Speaking at a Commons Press Gallery lunch, Mr Major said: "We cannot win elections from the Centre; we cannot win them either from the right wing. That is the way of becoming a minority party of no significance."

He added: "The Centre Right is where the Conservative party's gut essentially is. That is where it needs to be. It is certainly where my heart is and I will be pushing at the open door that William Hague has laid out to make sure that is the direction we take."

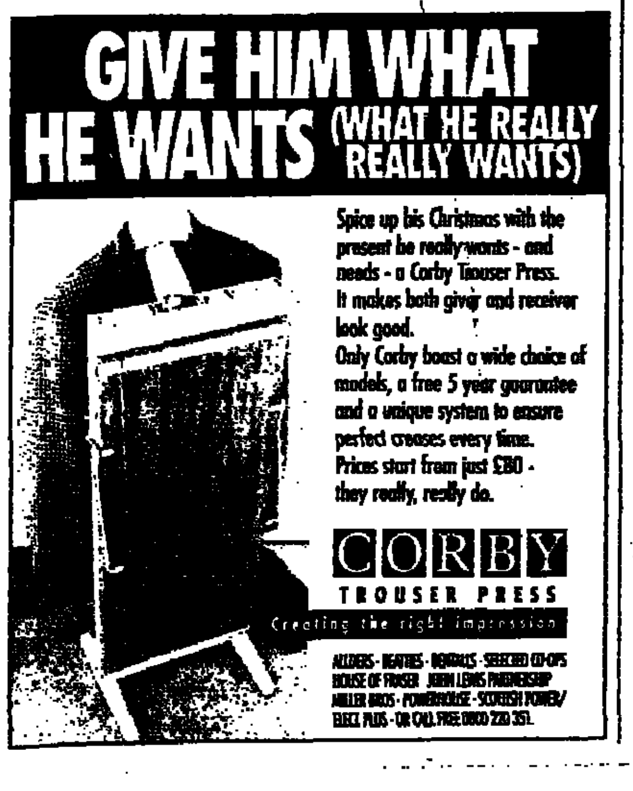
In a warning against the Tories becoming too Eurosceptic, Mr Major said: "I want to see my party having an ideology but to use that ideology as a political compass, not as a straitjacket."

The party, he said, should strive to gather together the people of "a basically conservative nation which votes anti-Tory from time to time".

Mr Major denied that Mr Temple-Morris, who was present, had been pushed out of the party. "The door was open but it was Peter who walked out," he said. "I am sorry Peter has gone. I would welcome him back because he has a distinctive Conservative voice. If Peter reconsiders, no one would be more pleased than I would. I would not be throwing bricks at Peter. I would be buying him a large gin and tonic and saying: 'welcome back'."

The Tory party should be a broad party, he said. "There is as much room in the Conservative Party for people with Peter's views, as well as with my views, and others' views. We are not a narrow ideological group and we are not going to become one."

Mr Temple-Morris said afterwards: "I was very grateful for the way that John Major treated the issue. He was very generous and nice."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Israel rushes to block Arab census

By Christopher Walker in Jerusalem

THE struggle for Jerusalem intensified yesterday as Israel rushed through legislation designed to prevent attempts by the Palestinian Authority to conduct a census among the estimated 180,000 Arabs in annexed east Jerusalem.

The move to push through three consecutive readings of the Bill in a single Knesset session was the first time such a move, dubbed by the Israeli press as "a lightning lawmaking bid", had been made since Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister, extended Israeli law to the Syrian Golan Heights in 1981.

The legislation was tabled in the form of an amendment to Israel's law on implementing its peace deals with the Palestine Liberation Organisation. "It widens the authority to prevent all activities of the PLO or of the Palestinian Authority inconsistent with the sovereignty of the state of Israel," the Justice Ministry said.

Israeli security in east Jerusalem was tightened to clamp down on any Palestinians trying to conduct census activity there.

Thousands of census staff were collecting questionnaires already distributed throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip in an exercise launched with deliberate symbolism to mark another step towards Palestinian statehood and to mark this week's tenth anniversary of the start of the intifada.

In the occupied West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian supporters of the census, the first conducted there for 30 years and the first carried out by the Palestinians themselves, carried posters reading: "Census is the way to build the state".

Jemima Khan echoes mullahs

By Christopher Thomas, South Asia Correspondent

JEMIMA KHAN'S transformation from Western socialite to protagonist of conservative Eastern values has surprised and delighted Pakistanis.

She says fundamental aspects of Pakistani society are "supremely civilised" compared with the West — an affirmation that the troubled Islamic state will find reassuring from such a glamorous exemplar of Western culture.

In two articles in *The News*, a respected daily newspaper, the daughter of the late Sir James Goldsmith, the financier, criticises the disintegration of family in the West and declares her delight with the extended Pakistani family: in her case, an army of relatives of her husband, Imran Khan, the former Pakistani cricket captain-turned-politician. She lives in Lahore with his father and sisters, their husbands and their children, and two years after her marriage professes to like the swirl of it all. "I firmly believe that the joint family system and small intimate communities form a more solid foundation for the development of mature and stable individuals."

Her vigorous defence of her adopted country and scorn for Western decadence sounds almost like the language of mullahs, and certainly of right-wing politicians, to wit: "The increasingly high divorce and crime rates [in the West], the domestic violence and child abuse, are all signs of severe social breakdown and moral disintegration." She says Pakistan is mistakenly viewed by many Westerners as brutal, uncivilised, and filled with terrorists and fundamentalists. "True," she adds, "corruption is endemic and politically and economically the country is in a mess."

> ‘In England, children are brought up at a distance, physically and emotionally’

Mrs Khan tells of lessons she has learnt from Pakistanis about raising children — not putting them in separate rooms away from their parents at night; and breast-feeding babies well beyond the three weeks to three months considered normal in the West. Pakistani women, she notes, breast-feed for two years.

She believes her year-old son benefits from the joint family. Once a week his grandfather, Aga Jan, takes all his grandchildren to Friday prayers in the local mosque — a custom she thought touchingly old-fashioned when she first moved to Pakistan. In the West, she informs readers, families are often barely able to fulfil their basic functions to protect and instruct.

ANDRE CAMARA / THE TIMES

Jemima Khan, in England with her son. Now she praises Pakistani society's virtues and scorns Western decadence

She expresses sympathy for single working mothers in the West, who have few social benefits and are forced to send children to day-care centres. Mrs Khan praises the practice of discussing marital problems within the family home, whereas in England people go to marriage-guidance counsellors. And "instead of asking our mothers to help with unruly children, we go to behavioural specialists".

When she visits England she says she longs to be able to take her son to dinner with her, but it is not considered conventional. "In England, children are generally brought up at a distance, both physically and emotionally."

She ends her praise of Pakistan by comparing its ties of family and community with the individualism and selfishness of Western culture. "I would think that most Westerners would have to agree that in many ways Pakistani society is far less barbaric than it sometimes appears."

Winnie suffers setback in ANC race

From Inigo Gilmore in Johannesburg

THE attempt by Winnie Madikizela-Mandela to become deputy president of South Africa's ruling African National Congress suffered a further setback yesterday when the party announced plans to alter the nomination process at next week's conference in a move designed to undermine her chances.

Charles Nqakulu, the ANC's nominations committee co-ordinator, said the proportion of a show of hands by the voting delegates required for a nomination to proceed may be increased from 10 per cent to 25 per cent or 30 per cent.

The change may be decisive in Mrs Mandela's campaign for the post, as her rival Jacob Zuma has been nominated by all nine provinces and she can challenge him only if she is nominated from the floor. Although her supporters insist they will be able to muster sufficient support, whatever the procedure, delegates might be reluctant to show their support publicly for Mrs Mandela.

There has been an increasingly wide rift between President Mandela's former wife and the ANC national leadership, which is aiming to isolate her.

Rescuers abandon attempt to free ‘human zoo’ women

Members of a Burmese tribe who were rescued from captivity by welfare workers have been sent back to their kidnappers by Thai police, **Andrew Drummond** reports from Mai Ai

The captive long-necked Paduang

AN ATTEMPT to free the captive women and children of a Burmese long-necked hill tribe, who have been kept under guard as a tourist attraction for visitors to northern Thailand, has ended in failure with rescuers saying they left the district fearing for their lives.

Despite protestations from refugee officials and a Thai child welfare group, the 32 surviving members of the Padaung tribe, who were kidnapped last year and made exhibits in a "human zoo", were handed back into the care of their kidnappers and a gang leader.

While it is not unusual in Thailand for district officials and police to work in collusion with gangsters, and in many cases be on their payroll, Sudarat Serewat, a child welfare worker, said she was shocked by events in the town of Mai Ai, northern Thailand, and worried about the country's human rights image. "I am deeply saddened and very concerned for these people, who cried out for help," she said. Ms Sudarat said she would return to Bangkok and raise the matter at a higher level of government.

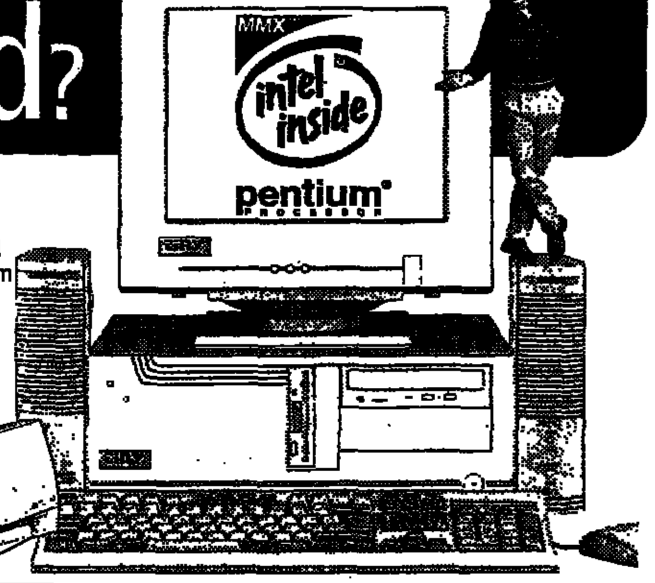
Central to the row are the large sums being made by a Thai businessman, newspaper publisher and nightclub owner, Thana Nakluang, who was named by *The Times* last month after we followed the trail of the kidnapped Padaung to his camp near Mai Ai. Here the Padaung were made to build bamboo huts next to a Thai Army Ranger post, and are guarded by his men, who live in barracks and have an armoury of M16s and even mortars. Tourists are charged between £4 and £5 to look at the women. Guides accompanying tourists claim that generous Thai people have rallied together to give the Padaung land and a living. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Padaung say they are deprived of medical attention and schooling for their children, forbidden to leave the camp and that two have died through lack of medical help.

In ugly scenes outside Mai Ai police station, Nakluang's bodyguards threatened to beat a *Times* photographer, who had arrived after Ms Sudarat had accompanied several Padaung to give statements about their kidnapping. "Keep out of our business you lizard," said Rakkiat Siriwalai, whom the Padaung had identified as one of the kidnappers.

From inside the police station the four Padaung men begged the refugee and Thai officials not to let the police send them back to the camp. "You have to take us all out together now, or we do not know what will happen," said one.

Thana Nakluang denied the people were held against their will. "I am looking after them out of the goodness of my heart. They are much better off here. And they are free to come and go. Obviously I make money too." He denied the Padaung had been kidnapped, saying they had merely wandered across the border near his camp. When I asked him if he would tell the Padaung they were free to go, he replied: "I could not do that. Their welfare is my responsibility."

Surapong Chaiyanan, Acting Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Ministry, said yesterday he had submitted a full report to the Thai Ministry of Interior and the Thai Army to take action if the report proved true.



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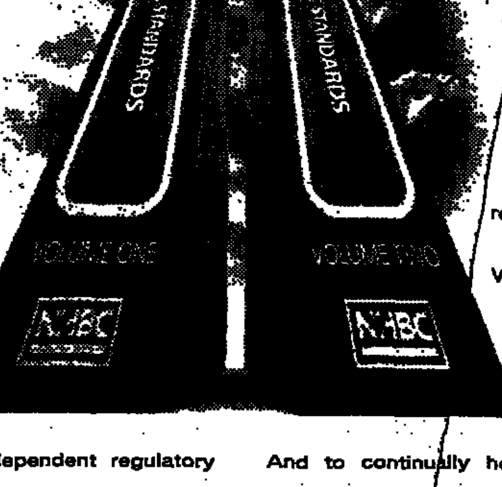

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Harare rioters 'will face police bullets'

From Jan Raath in Harare

THE Zimbabwean Government reacted imperiously yesterday in the face of an overwhelming display of anti-government sentiment this week, with a threat that police would shoot demonstrators.

Cabinet ministers appeared astonished at the almost total support for Tuesday's one-day national strike that closed down government and business, and last night were forced to withdraw or soften a series of taxes imposed last month.

Attempts to push legislation through parliament faced a rebellion by backbenchers of the ruling Zanu (PF) party, who refused to pass the increase in sales tax and taxes on fuel and electricity.

After a two-hour parliamentary caucus meeting, Herbert Murerwa, the Finance Minister, announced that 5 per cent increases on taxes on fuel and electricity charges would be removed from a Bill, leaving a 2.5 per cent rise in sales tax to 17.5 per cent. An increase in income tax was dropped at the weekend after protests from grassroots supporters at the annual party conference.

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), which organised the strike, is due to discuss the issue next week. It is expected to press for the removal of the sales tax.

The streets of Harare, the capital, returned to normal yesterday after a day of violence which flared when police confronted strikers with a barrage of teargas and flailing batons. Dumiso Dabengwa, the Home Affairs Minister, told parliament that people "should not take to the streets for the sake of demonstrating. The workers should know that if they stretch police patience too far, they would not hesitate to shoot them."

He said he had ordered police to stop Tuesday's protests because of an "unholy alliance" between white employers and farmers and the ZCTU. He refused to give MPs details of the "alliance". Lazarus Nzareyebani, an MP, warned Mr Dabengwa: "Those who live by the sword, die by the sword."

President Mugabe's handling of the nation's political and economic crisis, rooted in uncontrolled corruption and incompetent administration, has stripped away the temerity with which people and organisations usually approach him and his party. A wave of angry denunciations, in language rarely heard in Zimbabwe, has followed the riots.

Lawyers for civic bodies were last night drafting a petition to the High Court to prosecute Augustine Chihuri, the Police Commissioner, for contempt of court, which carries a jail sentence. Despite being served with a court order not to interfere with the mid-morning protest on Tuesday, police continued their violent operation until late in the afternoon.

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights described police behaviour as "nothing short of fascism", and called on Mr Chihuri and Mr Dabengwa to apologise or resign.

Mike Auret, head of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe, said Mr Dabengwa's "most irresponsible statement will do nothing but encourage police in these circumstances" to open fire on civilians. Zimbabwean police routinely carry automatic weapons.

☐ **London:** Baroness Symons, the Foreign Office minister, last night criticised Zimbabwe's plans to seize white-owned farmland, saying that it would damage the economy and do nothing to help the poor. *(Reuters)*

Chihuri: urged to apologise or quit

Leading article, page 23

ANURUDDHA LOKUHAPUARACHCHI · REUTERS

An elephant, crippled by a mine in an area of Sri Lanka where troops and Tamil rebels are fighting, limps as his keeper takes him for a bath at the Pinnawela elephant orphanage. The animal has rejected every effort to fit an artificial limb

Cooking pot poses threat to Africa's great apes

From David Orr in Nairobi

APE populations in Africa are being devastated by hunting and trade in "bushmeat", the name given to any wildlife destined for the table. In some countries in West Africa, numbers of chimps and gorillas are declining rapidly because of commercial hunting.

"The bushmeat trade is the greatest danger to apes in Central and West Africa today", Jane Goodall, the British conservationist, said here yesterday. "There are large chimp populations in Cameroon, Gabon and the two Congos but they are disappearing fast."

Wildlife has been part of the diet of Africans for centuries but it is being hunted more intensively now than ever. As logging companies push deeper into forests, new areas become accessble to hunters who find ready markets for bushmeat.

Bushmeat is widely available in restaurants in West Africa as well as in cities such as Paris, Madrid and Brussels which have large immigrant populations. In Yaounde in Cameroon, gorilla is served smoked or as steak or stew.

Rotting monkey meat has been found in suitcases of passengers travelling from Africa to Spain and baggage handlers have refused to touch the luggage because of the smell and their fear of the deadly Ebola virus, which kills humans, chimpanzees and monkeys.

"It used to be just about subsistence hunting for the local people in West Africa," said Ms Goodall, best known for her work on chimpanzees in Tanzania where the bushmeat trade is also growing. "Now hunters are using different weapons. They shoot the animals, dry the meat or smoke it, then send it out of the forest with the logging companies."

Instead of using traditional nets, spears and snares, pygmy groups such as the Ba'Aka of the Congo and Cameroon now use shotguns supplied by traders and loggers. According to a study by the World Society for the Protection of Animals, an estimated 800 western lowland gorillas are killed annually for the bushmeat trade in one district of Cameroon.

In recent months, gorillas and large numbers of elephants are reported to have been killed for food by soldiers in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire).

The offspring of dead apes are either left to die or are sold as pets. In Central Africa, infant chimps are often offered by roadside vendors to passing motorists.

Though the trade in apes for pets is decreasing worldwide, chimpanzees are still sought after in some Arab countries.

BUSH CUISINE

Chimps and gorillas are usually roasted over hot coals on a spit. The head is chopped off first: cooks say it looks too human and can frighten diners. The brain is considered a delicacy in some countries.

Bushmeat, not known for tenderness, must be cooked slowly. Before cooking, it is seasoned with salt, and sometimes the dish is eaten with piri-piri (chilli) or a sauce, though rarely with herbs.

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Kazakhs protest as capital moves to frozen north

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

TO THE protests of bureaucrats and the outrage of diplomats, Kazakhstan yesterday officially moved its capital 700 miles north to the bleak and frozen town of Akmola.

In a gesture reminiscent of the follies of Soviet leaders, who moved entire populations around the empire like chess-pieces, President Nazarbayev proclaimed the opening of Central Asia's newest capital.

"For the first time in its dramatic 20th-century history, Kazakhstan has made its own decision about its capital," the autocratic leader told a glum audience of officials forced to start new lives on the barren northern Kazakh steppes.

"Akmola is one of the geographical centres of Eurasia," he said. "It will become a major communications centre for this supercontinent."

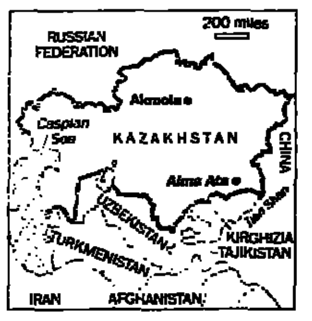
Despite his optimistic tone, the town of 300,000 has a long way to go. There is barely any infrastructure in place to run a country the size of Western Europe. Power failures are frequent and gas and water supplies are routinely cut. In contrast, the tree-lined streets of Alma Ata, the former capital set in the foothills of the Tien Shan mountains, have never looked so good.

Ever since Nikita Khrushchev made Akmola the centre of his disastrous "virgin lands" campaign to settle and develop the Central Asian steppes, the town has earned the reputation of being one of the bleakest locations in the former Soviet Union.

In the winter, temperatures regularly drop to -40C (-40F). The capital is buffeted by blizzards that its long-suffering inhabitants are forced to walk sideways into the wind to get anywhere. Last year 100 people died in winter storms.

Even during the short summer months there is little respite from the harsh elements and the area is infested with mosquitoes.

The Government has so far not offered convincing reasons for disrupting the lives of thousands of bureaucrats, many of whom have been separated from their families. The reasons given for the move are that Alma Ata is too crowded, too close to the Chinese border and located in an active earthquake zone.



However, the real reason is far more logical; the vast country with a population of only 17 million is struggling to assert its independence since the break-up of the Soviet Union. The ethnic Kazakhs are particularly fearful about the country's northern areas bordering Russia which are rich in metals, oil and farmlands. Russians, who form a majority in the north, resent the Kazakh-dominated Government and there have been calls by Russian nationalists on both sides of the border to bring the region under Moscow's rule.

Whether the establishment of a new capital will help to reassert Kazakhstan's nationhood will probably depend on the hardiness of the country's leadership. While Mr Nazarbayev insists he plans to spend New Year's Eve in his new capital, observers note he has kept his official residences in Alma Ata and that he rarely spends more than a few days at a time in Akmola.

The foreign community has so far shown no signs of movement, and none of he diplomatic corps has yet followed the Government to its new seat of power.

"We do not at this stage have any plans to move the embassy from Alma Ata," a Foreign Office spokesman said.

REUTERS

A RUSSIAN commando takes up position at *Sheremetyevo-1 airport in* Moscow yesterday in a successful operation to arrest a lone hijacker who had taken control of an aircraft.

Commandos foil Russian hijack

The Ilyushin-62's 142 passengers were freed, all unaware of the hijacking. Gennadi Todikov, 59, is alleged to have taken over the aircraft, armed only with a fake bomb, after it took off from *Magadan, eastern Russia,* bound for Moscow. The man was said to have demanded $10 million (£6 million) and political asylum in Switzerland. *(Reuters)*

Yeltsin's return to hospital 'purely a precaution'

FROM ROBIN LODGE
IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN was admitted to a sanatorium yesterday with an acute respiratory infection and was expected to remain there for ten to 12 days in case his condition should become serious.

Mr Yeltsin, 66, has a long history of heart disease and other health problems and in November last year underwent a heart bypass operation from which it took him nearly six months to recover. His return to the Barvikha sanatorium, just outside Moscow, immediately raised speculation that he is seriously ill. However, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the presidential spokesman, said yesterday that the Russian leader was suffering from nothing worse than a viral infection and that his admission to Barvikha was purely precautionary.

"In the wake of a cold, the President has developed a respiratory viral infection and doctors do not rule out the possibility of it turning into influenza. Accordingly, they recommended that the President stay in a sanatorium," he said.

Mr Yastrzhembsky said the President continued to conduct matters of state and was in touch with his Government by telephone. He had not been confined to bed, but had been advised against going outdoors. Mr Yeltsin was still planning to go ahead with his regular weekly radio address to the nation tomorrow. Other engagements in the coming few days had been cancelled, although he did plan to cast his vote at elections this Sunday for the Moscow City Council.

Over the past few months, Mr Yeltsin has appeared remarkably fit and even robust — to the chagrin of many opposition leaders who had called earlier in the year for his resignation on health grounds. His recovery startled even his strongest supporters, who had been dismayed by his appearance in the weeks after his operation. He looked frail and weak, slurred his words and often seemed unaware of his surroundings. Few then thought it possible that he would ever return to full-time work, let alone see out his full term to 2000.

But Mr Yeltsin characteristically defied the doubters and in the past few months has seemed rejuvenated. He has been looking fitter and more energetic than for the previous two years, when at times he appeared worn down through work, his heart trouble or what many assumed to be an over-indulgence in alcohol.

A keen sportsman and lavish reveller in the past, Mr Yeltsin is understood to lead a more subdued life these days, forgoing tennis and heavy drinking sessions in favour of calmer pursuits. Some weeks ago, he was given a check-up by Renat Akchurin, the heart surgeon who led his operating team. He pronounced him fit and fully recovered.

Mr Yeltsin has had a busy schedule over the past weeks and months, culminating last week in a state visit to Sweden, where his first symptoms are said to have appeared.

THE PRESIDENT'S MEDICAL HISTORY

PRESIDENT Yeltsin's previous health scares include:

☐ **April 1990:** While travelling in Spain, in hospital with "possible" heart trouble.

☐ **September 1994:** Fails to get off plane in Ireland for meeting with Taoiseach. Later, says he overslept.

☐ **July 1995:** In hospital for two weeks with acute heart trouble.

☐ **October 1995:** In hospital for nearly a month with heart problems.

☐ **September 1996:** Renat Akchurin, the doctor performing Yeltsin's heart bypass surgery, says the President had a heart attack in late June or early July.

☐ **November 1996:** Undergoes quintuple heart bypass surgery. *(AP)*

WORLD IN BRIEF

Bombers target Greek minister

Athens: A bomb exploded yesterday outside the central Athens office of Vasso Papandreou, the Greek Minister for Development, injuring a bomb disposal expert who was trying to defuse it (John Carr writes). The man, who was wearing protective clothing, was not seriously hurt.

Police, acting on a tip-off, found the device shortly before Mrs Papandreou was due to arrive at her office. A similar device was also found and defused near the Athens office of a Canadian company planning extensive gold mining in northern Greece. The project has angered environmentalists. Mrs Papandreou suggested that "vested interests" harmed by her economic policies were responsible for the explosion outside her offices and said: "This is an act directed at the Government. We are not cowed by these dark forces."

Virus blackmail by hackers

Washington: Computer hackers have left a blackmail note on the Yahoo Internet search engine, threatening to turn a computer virus loose on millions of subscribers if a fellow hacker is not freed from jail. The hackers, calling themselves Pants/Hagis, demanded the release of Kevin Matnick. Diane Hunt, a Yahoo spokeswoman, said the hackers' presence on the search engine was short-lived and "the site was left untouched". She said there were no reports of computer damage as a result of the threat. The blackmail note claimed the virus would become active on Christmas Day, 1998, but an antidote would be given after Matnick was freed. *(AFP)*

Jordan expels Iraqi envoys

Amman: Jordan expelled seven Iraqi diplomats after its former ally executed four Jordanians accused of smuggling car parts worth about £500. Jawad Anani, the Deputy Prime Minister, summoned Nouri Elwayess, the Iraqi Ambassador, and told him to reduce the number of his diplomatic staff from 15 to eight, a government official said. The expelled diplomats have one week to leave. Earlier, Jordan recalled its chargé d'affaires from Iraq. Amman had not named a new ambassador to Baghdad since the term of the former envoy ended in September. *(AP)*

Dutch in Holocaust row

Amsterdam: The Dutch Government said it was investigating allegations that civil servants were allowed to buy Holocaust victims' possessions, such as watches and rings, at bargain prices in the 1960s. Jewish leaders expressed shock at the revelations, which threaten to tarnish the country's record of resistance to the Nazis and its heroic efforts to hide Jews such as Anne Frank. "People are discovering the dark side of what happened," said Ronni Naftaniel, of the Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel. *(AP)*

Call for neo-Nazi inquiry

Bonn: Volker Rühe, right, the German Defence Minister, proposed an independent inquiry into a series of incidents linking the army with right-wing extremism. The move was prompted by the latest incident to emerge — the invitation of Manfred Roeder, a convicted neo-Nazi bomber, to give a talk at an elite military academy in 1995. Herr Rühe proposed that the inquiry should be carried out by experts outside the army. *(Reuters)*

Mass cremation for Thais

Bangkok: Thai Buddhist monks began five days of religious ceremonies in the build-up to the world's largest cremation, involving the unclaimed remains of 21,437 people, witnesses said. The remains are mainly bones of unknown people collected over ten years. Hundreds of skulls have been cleaned by members of the public and artfully arranged in the shapes of holy symbols. *(AFP)*

Gallipoli veteran dies at 101

Sydney: Ted Matthews, the last survivor of the original landing at Gallipoli, the site of a bloody First World War battle which killed more than 11,000 Australian and New Zealand soldiers and helped to define a nation's character, died one month after his 101st birthday. He was the last of 16,000 troops who landed before dawn on April 25, 1915. *(AP)*

Turkey demands pledge on EU entry

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

TURKEY will not be fobbed off with vague promises of future European Union membership or meaningless meetings to make it feel good, Mesut Yilmaz, the Turkish Prime Minister, said after meeting Tony Blair.

He said Turkey wanted to be treated equally with the other EU applicants. It would not tolerate being put at the back of a queue in a special category with no assurance of eventual membership.

"Turkey needs a concrete strategy. We are the only country to be linked with the EU in a customs union and we deserve this." He denounced proposals for a conference of all applicants that would include Turkey, simply to please Turkish opinion, but would not promise anything.

Britain is a champion of closer Turkish relations with the EU, and is trying to remove a threatened Greek veto on Turkey attending a conference of all applicants. Mr Blair promised on Tuesday to uphold Ankara's arguments to other EU members when Britain takes over the presidency, Mr Yilmaz said.

In return, he promised to remove "all existing difficulties" — and especially to work for a solution in divided Cyprus. But Turkey could not do this on its own.

☐ **Tehran:** President Demirel of Turkey plans to withdraw from the Islamic summit here, apparently to avoid facing criticism of his country's ties with Israel. *(AP)*

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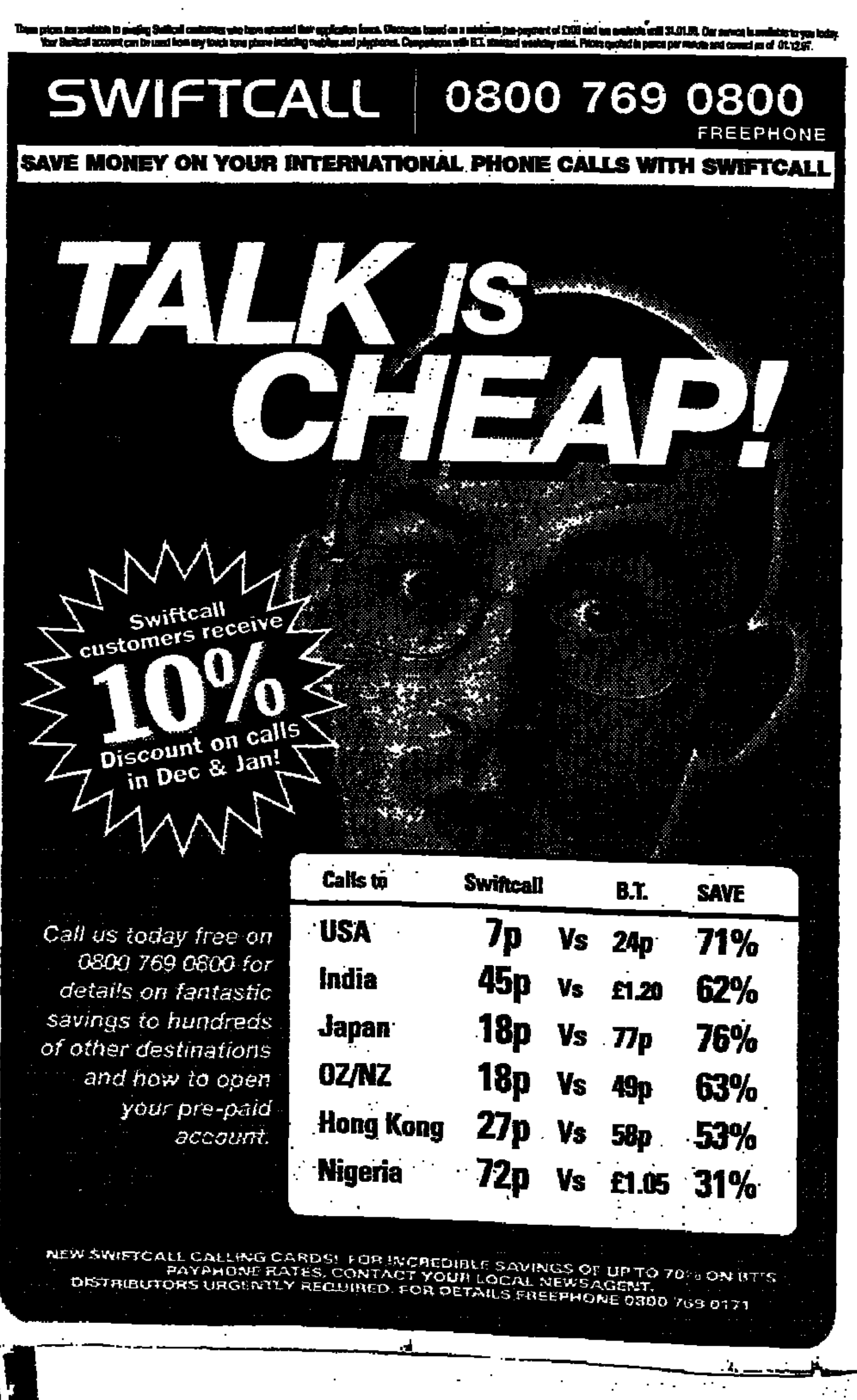
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Why the Yugoslav Army lost: its secret superweapon was a snowflake

Tom Walker in Belgrade tells how Serb strategy relied on psychics and mystics

A FORMER information officer of the Yugoslav Army says senior military personnel resorted to using psychic powers in a desperate attempt to counter growing American influence in the Balkans.

Colonel Ljubodrag Stojadinovic, dismissed from the army in 1995, has published the strange account of his final years in office in the Belgrade monthly *Profil*. He describes how a bizarre mixture of artists, mystics and astrologers were invited into army headquarters, where they attempted to harness "the energy of the Serb snowflake" to destroy American military targets.

The colonel has promised further embarrassing revelations about the fall from grace of a once respected force, and in the next issue of *Profil*, Belgrade's glossiest current affairs magazine, he will focus on the Yugoslav Army's strategic miscalculations.

"The belief the Serbs were invulnerable disappeared gradually when we started suffering defeats, first, shamefully, at the hands of the Slovenes, who beat us for sheer fun," writes Colonel Stojadinovic. "It became clear we weren't all that powerful against these great powers. Even the Croatians became a military superpower compared to the Serbs."

The colonel says that in early 1994 he was approached in his office by a fellow officer. Colonel "Bogi" Stojmenovic, who pulled out a "badly executed" drawing of a snowflake, explaining that it was the "symbol, source and origin of our national energy".

Colonel Stojmenovic explained how the snowflake "could have a destructive influence on the New World Order", writes Colonel Stojadinovic. "He told me that his group could, unnoticed and without any problems whatever, bring down planes, sink ships and assassinate odious persons at great distance."

Colonel Stojmenovic, says Colonel Stojadinovic, was joined by two other senior soldiers, Colonel Svetozar Radisic and Senior Sergeant Simeon Savic. Colonel Radisic, he says, found normal army operations "utterly unpoetic" while Sergeant Savic was preoccupied with evil energy emanating from an ancient well in Belgrade's most famous park, the Kalemegdan.

The servicemen would meet regularly with a television astrologer and former Miss Serbia, Milja Vujanovic, along with a black-cloaked actor, "Milic of Macva", famous for his theory that Serbs originated from the planet Sorab in the constellation Pleiades. The shadowy gathering, which some officers envisaged as a fully-fledged military unit, became known as "Group 69".

As the war in Bosnia ground on and international sanctions on Yugoslavia began to bite, the meetings became more regular. "The only ones who remained optimistic were Group 69," writes Colonel Stojadinovic. "The group in charge of paranormal occurrences carried on its work in the General Staff headquarters." After two US planes crashed on take-off from aircraft carriers in the Adriatic, Group 69 "claimed all this was the result of successful parapsychological activity".

Dragan Vicanovic, an editor with the occult magazine *Third Eye*, said yesterday that Group 69 had later concentrated its cosmic energies on the warship *USS Saratoga*. "We had a good time sinking the *Saratoga*, like we had a good time demonstrating and sinking [President] Milosevic last winter. The reality is that they are both still very much afloat."

Interviewed by *The Times* yesterday, Colonel Stojadinovic said he believed the army was in need of urgent reform. "Every army is a little ridiculous, but there are more ridiculous people per square metre in ours than most." The Yugoslav army itself last night refused to comment.

☐ Bonn: Furious Yugoslav and Bosnian Serb representatives yesterday staged a walkout from a Bonn conference aimed at putting pressure on all sides in Bosnia to implement the Dayton peace accords (Roger Boyes writes).

The protest was prompted by a mention of Serbia's Kosovo province in a communiqué winding up the two-day peace implementation conference. Western ministers had expressed concern that ethnic Albanians, who form the overwhelming majority in the province, were being put under intolerable pressure by Belgrade.

France hatches 'ridiculous' plan for millennium

Moves to turn the French capital into a city of light to welcome 2000 combine flair, imagination and questionable taste, **Ben Macintyre** reports from Paris

FRANCE is planning to welcome the millennium with a lavish extravaganza in which the perfumed waters of the Seine in Paris will swarm with shoals of multicoloured plastic fish, a new wooden tower will rise on the river's bank and the Eiffel Tower will lay an enormous luminous egg at midnight on December 31, 1999.

As Britain continues to debate the merits and contents of the Millennium Dome, France has unveiled a series of projects that will be hard to equal, combining Gallic flair, imagination and questionable taste. More than a hundred different projects were outlined this week on the theme of "Paris 2000, City of Light", but the most dramatic and controversial is a plan to turn the Eiffel Tower, for a night, into a high-tech chicken.

At 11pm, according to organisers, "a gigantic egg will slowly descend out of the belly of the tower, to the sound of 2,000 drums from five continents". On the stroke of midnight, the egg will crack open to reveal hundreds of television screens relaying images of millennial festivities from around the world.

The architectural focus of the celebrations will be the 650ft wooden Tour de la Terre (The Earth Tower), designed by Nicolas Normier, to be built beside the Seine in eastern Paris. The cost of construction is estimated at £25 million, to be met partly through public donations. The tower, complete with exhibition areas, bars and a restaurant, is intended to symbolise man's love of the environment.

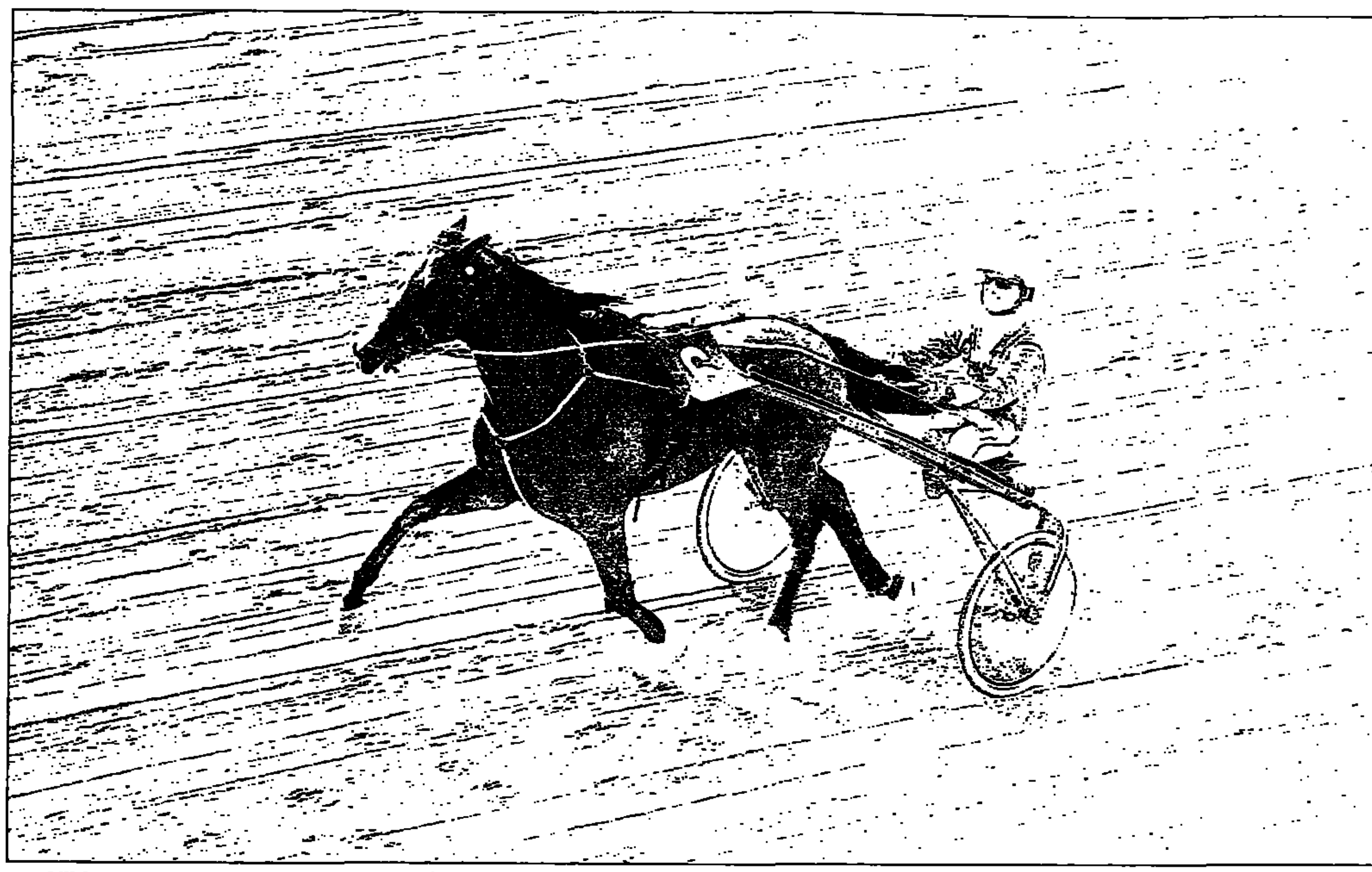
Ecologists have criticised the planners, arguing that the building could use rare hardwoods, further depleting tropical rainforests, although its designer insists the structure will be constructed mainly from common pine. In the river itself, 2,000 plastic fish in different colours will poke their heads 10ft out of the water as "symbols of the vitality of the city and witnesses to its future".

The vitality of the remaining live fish in the Seine may be further undermined by plans to "perfume" the river. The main French scent manufacturers are all supporting the millennium plans, but it is not yet known which perfume will be selected to give the Seine a more glamorous whiff. To mark the arrival of 2000, the Place de La Concorde will be turned into a vast sundial, using the great Egyptian obelisk in the middle of the square as a pointer.

The Place Charles de Gaulle Etoile will also be turned into a clock, using powerful lights mounted on the Arc de Triomphe to count down to the millennium on the 12 avenues leading into the square. To emphasise French literature, a "book" 22 yards wide and 15 yards high will be opened on September 1, 1999, in front of the Hôtel de Ville. The theme of the book will change daily, offering passers-by a total of 170 acres of the written word over the following year.

A rock concert in homage to Jimi Hendrix, marking 30 years since the Woodstock festival, will also be held on Longchamps racecourse. The French authorities, revealing their outline plans on Tuesday night, left no doubt that France is approching the millennium in a highly competitive spirit. "A month ago we were behind in the race. From today, we are a length ahead of the rest of the world," said Yves Mourousi, a former television presenter who will lead the French festivities.

But within hours of the unveiling, some of the more ambitious plans came under attack, most notably the New Year's Eve finale beneath the Eiffel Tower, which *Le Figaro* described as "extravagant and even ridiculous". The newspaper's Tanguy Berthemet said: "The laying of a giant egg by the Eiffel Tower . . . is a pretty weak bit of symbolism." Some critics claim the Paris 2000 organisers have given birth to a turkey.



Viking Kronos has won so many races for its owner and jockey, Lutfi Kolgjini, that bookies no longer take bets on a horse without rivals

Pavarotti: made a bid

Bets off on champion 'wonder horse'

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

ON THE racetracks of Italy they call him simply "the wonder horse". Viking, a magnificent two-year-old bay, has won so many trotting races since the season started in September that bookmakers have stopped taking bets on him.

Luciano Pavarotti, the tenor, has offered more than £500,000 to buy Viking, but his owner and jockey, an Albanian refugee from Kosovo called Lutfi Kolgjini, knows he has a golden asset and is not letting him go. "I spent all I had on Viking, and he is paying me back in gold," he said yesterday. "It is like a fairy tale." Viking — whose full name is Viking Kronos, after the stables in the Veneto where he was trained — is by Conch, a noted trotter, out of American Winner. According to Mr Kolgjini, 38, who left the troubled Serbian province of Kosovo for Sweden to train as a jockey before coming to Italy, Viking was "the horse of my dreams".

He said: "I was looking for a colt who would bring me fame and fotune, and I heard on the grapevine that Viking was promising." He bought him at auction in Milan a year ago, for £35,000 — "my entire life savings. I have nothing else".

In a season of six major races, the horse has since earned him more than £250,000. "When I first tried him out, I thought my watch must have broken," he said. "Viking just ran, ran and ran like the wind. He broke all records."

The horse outstripped all rivals in his first race at Montecatini in September, and again at San Siro, Padua and other top Italian racetracks. Last Sunday Viking broke all world trotting records over 2km (1¼ miles) in Rome, and the bookies threw in the towel.

"I've stopped taking any bets on Viking Kronos," one bookmaker said. "I will only take bets for second place."

Mr Kolgjini insisted that the horse's appeal was due not only to his astonishing speed but also "sheer intelligence". He said: "You may not believe this, but he interprets races, and judges exactly when to put on a spurt of speed."

Chirac awards Jospin ironic cross

Jospin: Order of Merit

BY BEN MACINTYRE

PRESIDENT CHIRAC yesterday awarded Lionel Jospin, the Prime Minister, the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit, just moments after launching an attack on his plans to cut the working week to 35 hours.

According to tradition, all French Prime Ministers are presented with the order after six months in office, but M Chirac has made no secret of his belief that M Jospin's employment policies are without merit, and yesterday's presentation ceremony provided a scene of crowning irony in the increasingly fractious "cohabitation" between the conservative President and his Socialist Prime Minister.

M Jospin said he was "delighted" to receive the Grand Cross insignia, invented by Charles de Gaulle and awarded to every French Prime Minister since 1974. The Prime Minister said that M Chirac had made a "courteous" if understandably brief speech during the award ceremony at the Elysée Palace. But just a few minutes earlier, during a Cabinet meeting, M Chirac had been anything but polite as he lambasted the Government's proposed law to cut the legal working week from 39 hours to 35.

"You will not be surprised to hear my reservations on the Government's solution. I do not think this Bill, given its restrictive and obligatory nature, will be favourable to employment," M Chirac told the assembled ministers. The Cabinet adopted the Bill.

Police tackle child sex ring

Paris: More than 50 people have been detained across France in an operation against a paedophile ring using the Internet to distribute sexually explicit photographs of children, police said yesterday. The round-up was the culmination of an eight-month investigation by paramilitary gendarmes.

Five people, detained since Tuesday morning, have been placed under formal investigation, essential in bringing a person to trial in France but implying no guilt. *(Reuters)*

Majorca Germans' power bid

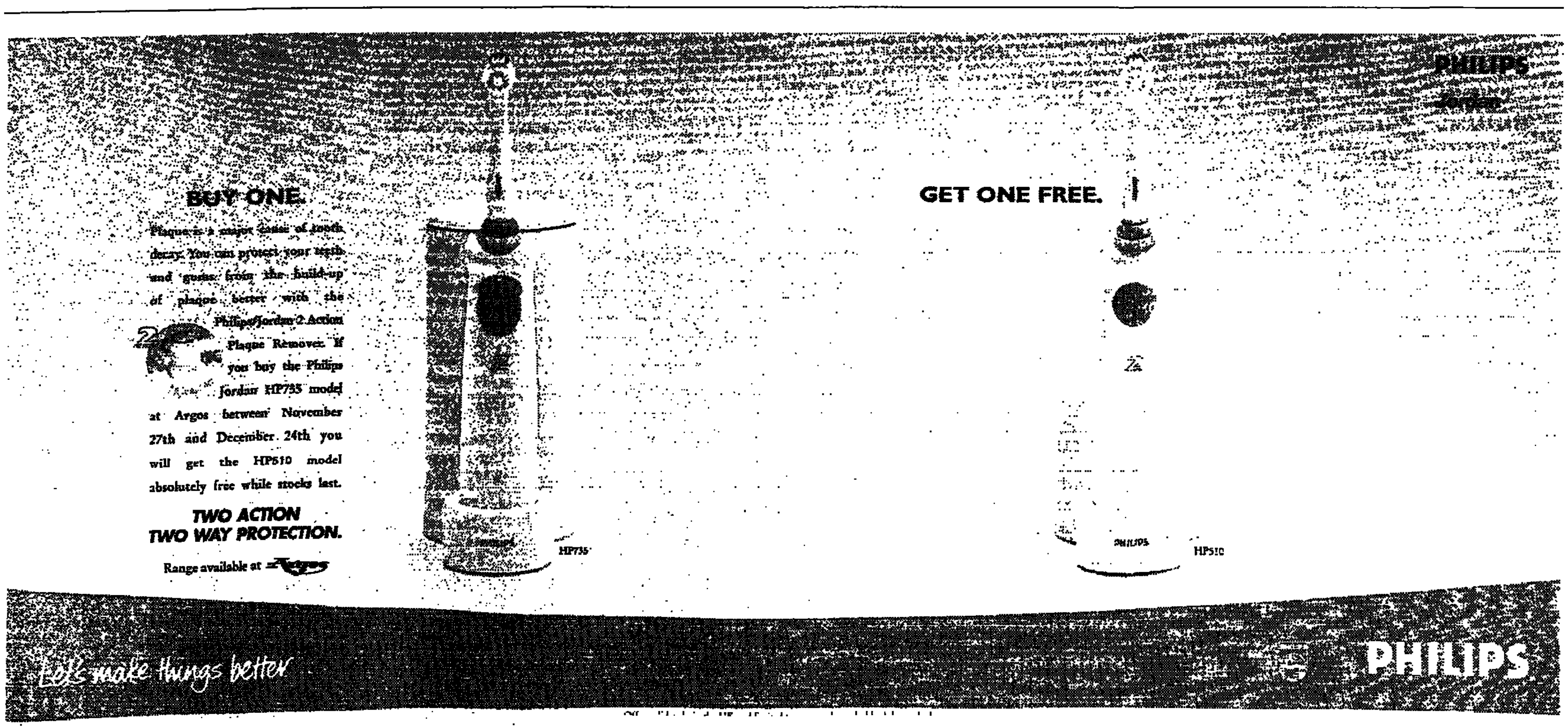
FROM GILES TREMLETT IN MADRID

A POLITICAL party for Germans living on the Spanish island of Majorca has caused outrage among islanders and other foreign residents.

The new party, German Friends in Spain, is being launched to fight for town halls across the Mediterranean island in the 1999 local elections. "There are a lot of us and it is time they listened to our voice," said Horst Abel, the German businessman who has announced plans to set up the party. Herr Abel is one of an estimated 30,000 Germans who make up 5 per cent of the Majorca population. Most have settled in the past 15 years. Herr Abel's party has a real chance of winning seats, and even mayoral office, in towns where German residents outnumber native Majorcans.

Islanders have reacted angrily to the creation of an exclusively German party. A local newspaper complained that the only friendly thing about the new party was its name. "The friendship it offers hides the thirst for power and control of a community that considers itself superior and makes no attempt to integrate," it said yesterday.

Most Germans in Majorca work in the tourist industry. Majorcans complain that the Germans have formed their own exclusive community. Germany has overtaken Britain as the most important source of tourists. More than three million Germans went to Majorca last year.



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PHILIPS

Film star jailed for drugs and attack on girlfriend

By Giles Whittell

THE youthful actor in *Broken Arrow* and *The Name of the Rose*, Christian Slater, has been jailed for six months in Los Angeles for using drugs and assaulting his girlfriend. The sentence came a day after Robert Downey Jr received a similar one for repeatedly failing to kick a drug habit.

Slater was arrested, naked, in August at a flat owned by Marlon Brando's adopted daughter, Petra, after a party there degenerated into violence. In court on Tuesday his lawyer, in the actor's absence, did not contest battery and substance abuse charges.

After his arrest, Slater, 28, told police he had had "only a couple of hours of sleep" during two days of drinking and taking cocaine and heroin. The police were called when he attacked his girlfriend, Michelle Jonas, biting her in the stomach, and brawled with a man who tried to separate them. As police arrived, the actor reportedly fled naked, kicking one officer down a flight of stairs before he could be subdued.

He has acquired a reputation as a bad boy, but issued a *mea culpa* on Tuesday through his publicist: "When you're a celebrity, you start believing you can act off the screen any way you want, without consequence."

LA unveils $1bn palace of art

From Giles Whittell
in Los Angeles

DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

Andrea Rothe, paintings conservator at the museum, analyses a European work for a visitor. Below, the centre on the Los Angeles hilltop

LIKE a 21st-century crusader's castle, a museum hailed by its admirers as the greatest cultural project of its age has opened to the press on a hilltop 700ft above Los Angeles, with the unmistakeable message that the world capital of low culture wishes to be taken seriously.

The new J. Paul Getty Centre, a stunning monument to wealth as well as art, opens to the public next week after six years of planning, eight of construction and 100 trips from Italy by ocean freighters laden with rough-hewn travertine marble.

In five opulent pavilions the museum plays host to a famously eccentric collection once housed in a neo-classical Malibu villa, and to major acquisitions never shown there for lack of space.

Richard Meier's vast modernist complex, dubbed "a shining city on a hill" by the *Los Angeles Times*, also comprises four research institutes and a pricey restaurant likely to become a compulsory dining destination even for Hollywood types with scant interest in fine art.

Never shy of controversy, the trust that manages the $4.5 billion (£2.7 billion) Getty oil fortune courted more in building its new home. Shunning more conventional sites among the skyscrapers of "downtown" Los Angeles and the city's existing museum district, the Getty trustees bought 600 acres of virgin hillside in the Santa Monica mountains and in the late 1980s turned 110 of them into a huge building site. For lack of parking space, car-bound visitors must approach on a computerised tram.

The white-haired Mr Meier answered criticism that his $1 billion creation is aloof and hard to reach. "There is no place in the city as accessible or visible," he insisted to an international media throng in his echoing circular foyer. "There is no place from which you can see the city from the mountains to the ocean as you can here. The city unfolds and is a part of the museum experience."

Exceptional weather helped make his point. After a three-day "El Niño" storm, visitors were treated to spectacular 100-mile views inland to snow-capped mountains, and of offshore islands seldom seen in the summer because of the smog.

Three days of oversubscribed press previews will be followed by three more earmarked for black-tie receptions to which invitations are more sought after, according to the trade paper *Daily Variety*, than tickets to the forthcoming *Titanic* premiere.

One studio chief, David Geffen of Dreamworks SKG, has been quoted as calling the new Getty "too good for Los Angeles". Mr Meier diplomatically interpreted the remark to mean "there's just no place like this in Los Angeles". This is, if anything, an understatement. Frequently compared to the *grands projets* of Mitterrand's Paris, the complex boasts 30,000 tonnes of marble, 33,000 light fixtures and 10,000 transplanted trees.

J. Paul Getty Sr, who shocked his heirs as well as the art world by leaving $700 million to the first Getty museum on his death in 1976, would still pale at the money being spent in his name. Even as the country's richest man, he made visitors use a payphone.

Bernstein auction to benefit maestro's charity

From James Bone
in New York

LEONARD BERNSTEIN'S signed Bösendorfer grand piano, which he famously nicknamed his "B52", went on sale at Sotheby's here last night along with hundreds of other mementoes ranging from evening capes to conducting batons from the composer's West Side flat.

The contents of Bernstein's home in the Dakota building overlooking New York's Central Park, where he lived for 23 years before his death in 1990, were put up for auction by his three children. A portion of the proceeds from the two-day sale, expected to total about $500,000 (£303,000), will go to the maestro's charity, the Bernstein Education Through the Arts Fund.

Bernstein, perhaps best known for *West Side Story*, and his wife Felicia, a Chilean-born actress who died in 1978, were a magnet for New York's arty crowd. Friends included Mike Nichols, the film director, painters such as Larry Rivers, and fellow musicians and composers including Isaac Stern and Stephen Sondheim.

"A party of Lenny and Felicia's meant excitement, interest, unpredictability, great food, fun," the actress Lauren Bacall writes in the Sotheby's catalogue. "From the moment you stepped out of the elevator and approached their front door [which, of course, was always left open] your spirits lifted."

The Bösendorfer grand sat in the living room and was often used by Bernstein to play four-handed duets with friends and family. It was on this semi-concert piano that Bernstein composed his opera *A Quiet Place* and other works.

Its keyboard has three extra notes — all black — at the bottom register. Several of the keys have cigarette burns.

Bernstein adored the instrument so much that he signed the iron frame with his name and a heart. Sotheby's estimates it will sell for $60,000 to $80,000.

Also on the block were the baton that Bernstein threw into the audience after his last concert with the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall and a group of three of his signature evening capes.

Bernstein: his piano could go for $80,000

Albright accused of imposing Cold War thinking on aides

The most prominent woman in the US Cabinet reigns over a foreign policy fortress, **Tom Rhodes** writes

SINCE Madeleine Albright was appointed US Secretary of State, the seventh floor of her department has become a mini-fiefdom within the Clinton Administration, a foreign policy fortress from which she reigns supreme.

While the most prominent woman in President Clinton's Cabinet and the first female Secretary of State regularly demands "out of the box" thinking from her subordinates, the reality is a world according to Madeleine in which only those who toe her line have any hope of survival.

She has weekly lunch meetings with William Cohen, the Defence Secretary, and Sandy Berger, the National Security Adviser, but considers herself first among equals in terms of foreign affairs.

Ms Albright believes she is one of the few members of the Administration untainted by the myriad White House scandals and has simultaneously maintained strong support among powerful Republicans in Congress. She relies on a small coterie of advisers to promote her thinking and preserve good relations with Capitol Hill. But other senior officials at the State Department, unable to support her often blunt approach, have gradually withered on the vine since her appointment.

The most prominent of these has been Strobe Talbott, her deputy who was once the Administration's chief co-ordinator on Nato and Russian relations. Mr Talbott has been deemed too generous in his overtures to Moscow and is now isolated from the inner sanctum.

Throughout the recent crisis with Iraq, Ms Albright is said to have been furious with the attention being paid to Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister who brokered a deal with President Saddam Hussein.

Mr Talbott is now considering his options. He is not alone. Tim Wirth, the Under-Secretary for Global Affairs, announced last month that he was leaving to become the administrator for Ted Turner's $1 billion donation to the UN. He had been America's lead negotiator at the international conference on global warming in Kyoto and his departure, weeks before the talks started, was viewed as a signal of his dissatisfaction with Ms Albright's lack of interest in the issue.

The most important members of her team now tend to be those with political rather than policy experience. Elaine Shocas, her Chief of Staff, Jamie Rubin, her spokesman, and Thomas Pickering, a former Ambassador to Moscow who is now Under-Secretary for Political Affairs, are among a small band who co-ordinate Ms Albright's global vision. "Her view of the world is what you might have expected from a Secretary of State 20 years ago," an official said.

"There's nothing wrong with that but it's old thinking, and if, as we have been told, we are trying to create a new foreign policy world, then she is doing nothing to facilitate that." Critics argue that this Cold War paradigm has been coloured by her Eastern European roots while she has apparently little interest in economic issues.

Only in recent months has the Secretary of State recognised the importance of America's role in the Middle East. She has recently been concentrating on trying to break the deadlock between Israel and the Palestinians.

Aware that the weapons inspections controversy with Iraq is far from over, Ms Albright is now pressing Israel to present a flexible approach more acceptable to the Arab states. If she can rebuild the Arab coalition that failed to support America last month, then she will have scored a notable triumph.

Cuban Church prays for Christmas gift from Castro

From David Adams
in Miami

ALMOST 30 years after Cuba's atheist Communist authorities abolished the Christmas holiday, Roman Catholic Church officials preparing for a visit next month by the Pope say they are waiting to hear if the traditional religious day will be reinstated.

When the Pope received President Castro at the Vatican in November last year, the pontiff requested that December 25 be restored as a state holiday as part of the run-up to his visit. Despite improved Church-State relations, the request has gone unanswered. On Tuesday, Cardinal Jaime Ortega, the Archbishop of Havana, said: "There is no concrete indication yet if there is going to be a holiday or not."

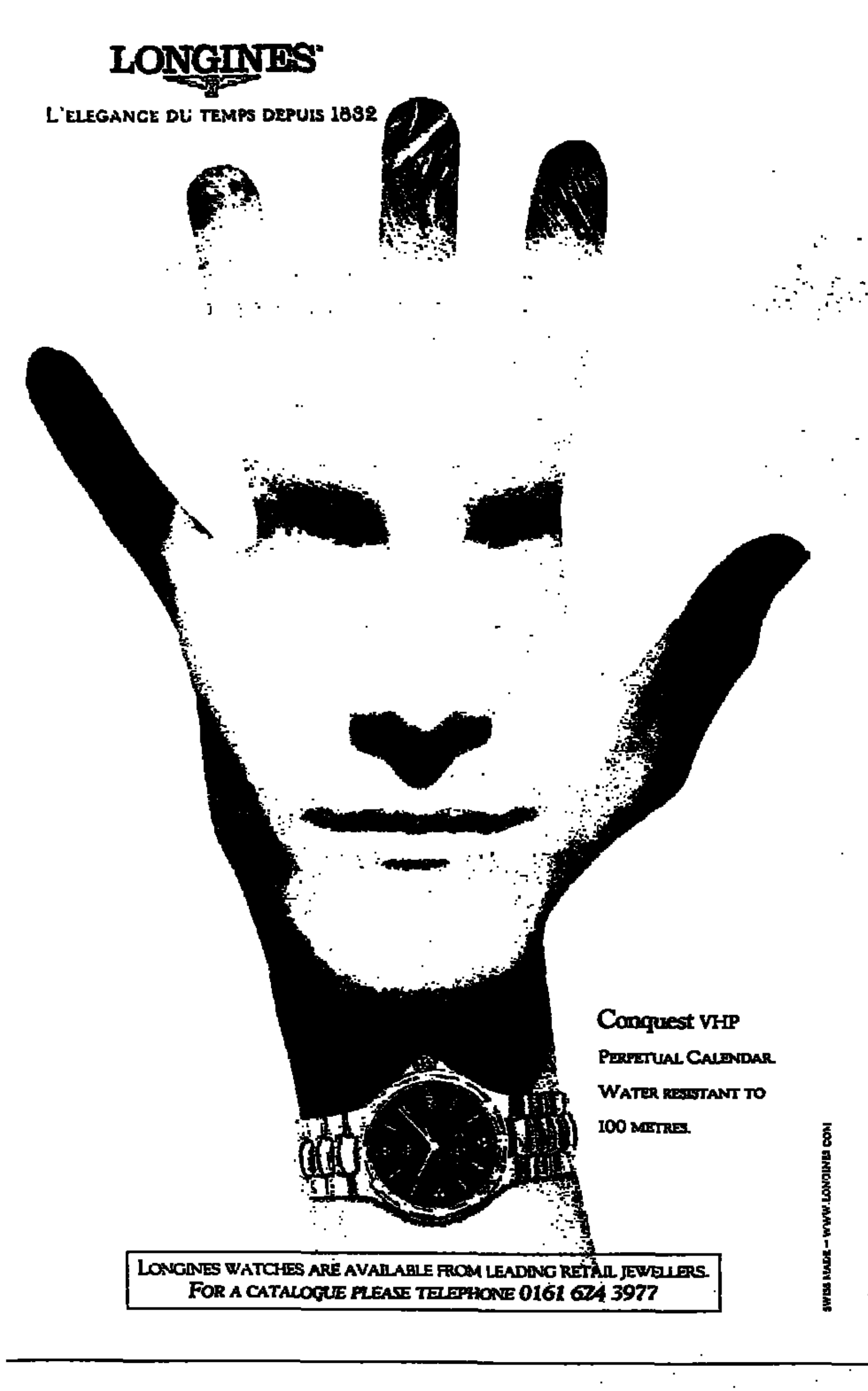
Cuba officially became atheist in 1962. Christmas was dropped from the Cuban calendar in 1969 as Señor Castro urged workers to dedicate themselves instead to a record sugar harvest. For years, any sign of religious observance, especially at Christmas, was regarded by neighbourhood Communist Party watchdogs as a dangerous sign of counter-revolutionary sympathies.

The Government eliminated formal restrictions on religious worship in 1991. But authorities continued to ban the public display of Christmas trees and Nativity scenes, except in hotels.

Although December 25 remains an official working day, increasing numbers of Cubans celebrate it in their homes and attend church.

Since late last month, Cardinal Ortega has urged Cubans to celebrate Christmas "in a special way", in part to help to prepare for the five-day visit by the Pope from January 21.

The Church remains hopeful that, even at this late stage, Christmas may be poised to make an official comeback. Mgr Ortega said the papal visit already "has borne much fruit", with greater space for religious observance, including permission for a series of open-air Masses that concluded on Monday night. He said the services had been attended by "multitudes".



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When will Russia find a new Tolstoy?

The Russian Booker Prize has galvanised writers to produce controversial winners. **Jason Cowley** reports

MAIN IMAGE FRANK HERRMAN; INSETS MARY EVANS

There may not be a contemporary Tolstoy, left, or Dostoevsky in Russian fiction, but the establishment of the Booker in 1992 has inspired other literary prizes

The old, grey Muscovite, breathless after battling through a scrum of photographers, fumbles for words as he peers down from the podium at the cultural crowd eating marinated salmon in the Maly Manezh art gallery.

Anatoli Azolsky, 67, has just won the 1997 Russian Booker Prize, and he appears humbly flummoxed by his success. The hard lights of nine television stations dazzle him; he clutches his $12,500 (£7,800) prize cheque (three years' wages for the ordinary Russian) like a vulnerable child holding his mother's hand.

Tomorrow Azolsky will be caught up in the kind of spat that is now so much part of the Moscow literary scene. But tonight is his, the culmination of a long journey that began in his years of internal exile under Stalin, years when he wrote without any hope of being published — "writing to the table", the Russians call it.

Whether this former factory worker was an appropriate symbol of the new literary Russia was a different matter. "Why did he win?" asked the critic and poet Helena Riumina. "This little, white-haired Soviet man with a grey face seems to come from Brezhnev's time. When he speaks, I hear the old style of a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. His phrases are wooden; he doesn't have his own language."

That his novel *The Cage*, a metaphysical thriller about a freethinking scientist's attempt to forge an autonomous identity, was set under the shadow of Stalinist terror inspired disappointment. At the press conference, I overheard one judge say: "When I hear Azolsky speak, I regret awarding him the prize. He is a man of the past."

This was an eventful year for the Russian Booker. The shortlist was traduced, the judges mocked, the winner ridiculed and the future of fiction itself questioned. If all this has a ring of familiarity, it should: the 1997 Russian Booker shared more than a family resemblance to its British cousin. Why, it even had its own Martin Amis or Ian McEwan, a virtuoso stylist called Viktor Pelevin, considered to be the outstanding writer of his generation (he is in his late thirties) but who, it seems, is destined to remain out of favour with Booker juries.

> 'I regret awarding him the prize. He is a man of the past'

The exclusion of *Chapaev and Emptiness*, Pelevin's novel about a hero of the civil war that followed the Russian Revolution, enraged everyone except the judges. The critic Konstantin Kedrov captured the mood when he said: "It looks like there are two different talents here: to be a jury member and to be an expert on literature."

The Russian Booker Prize is in its seventh year. Set up by Sir Michael Caine, then chairman of Booker plc, in association with the British Council, its effect on contemporary Russian literary culture cannot be overestimated. It has galvanised the Russian novel at a time when increasing numbers of people are turning away from fiction, preferring to read newspapers, magazines and historical narratives.

"During the Soviet days you would go on the Metro and everyone would be reading books; but now it's all glossy magazines," complains Igor Shaitanov, a literature professor at Moscow University and chairman of the 1997 judges.

Professor Shaitanov is dismissive of those cultural pessimists who say that the Russian novel is doomed never to recapture its past grandeur, but he concedes that something has been lost in the rush to embrace capitalism. "We are living in a time of wilful anarchy; freedom has overwhelmed us. When we had the underground and people were writing *against* the system, writers had a point of focus."

The problem is compounded by the chaotic state of publishing and the prevailing threat of mafia terror. In August Aleksandr Krutik, 29, a publisher of school textbooks, was assassinated outside his Moscow apartment. His company publishes at least 30 per cent of all school and college textbooks. It is a lucrative market since Russian schools urgently require material untainted by the Soviet past. The criminal underworld of contemporary Moscow, a kind of Wild West of unfettered markets and cruel disparities in wealth, is naturally eager to control educational publishing.

Most novels are published in so-called "thick journals" — cultural magazines such as *Novy Mir* and *Znamya* — recalling in style, if not in content, the great literary periodicals of the 19th century. But even these are losing readers.

When the Booker was established, the nominators could scarcely find enough novels to form a long list; this year nine of the 42 entries were published as finished books. So there is progress.

The success of the Russian Booker has inspired imitators, most notably the Little Booker Prize, which honours philosophical essays and works of criticism; the waggish Anti-Booker Prize, set up by Boris Berezovsky, a media entrepreneur; and the Solzhenitsyn Prize, supported by the self-styled saviour of the Slavic people himself.

But, as the critic Lyudmila Lantsova points out: "The Booker will continue to overshadow all other prizes... because it takes skill to make people wait and talk and to create hype around the shortlisted candidates."

Skill *and* luck. For always running below the surface of the Russian Booker is a current of confusion. The awards dinner was a model of organised chaos; many more guests arrived than had been expected, and additional tables had to be swiftly laid. The resulting delay was softened by a steady flow of vodka and champagne, provided by co-sponsors Smirnov, and by memorable moments of cultural confusion: Vladimir Smirnov and Jonathan Taylor, the chairman of Booker plc, attempting to have a conversation when neither spoke the other's language; the delay in proceedings, like an echo on an international phone call, as every public pronouncement had to be translated (or mistranslated); the frisson of excitment when Sir Michael was mistaken for the British actor of the same name.

Best of all was the moment when Sir Michael was asked by a Russian television interviewer to name three "interesting contemporary Russian novelists". In a deep, resounding voice, he answered: "Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and..." He paused theatrically, drawing on his constant cigarette. Jonathan Taylor helpfully whispered: "What about Pushkin?" But Sir Michael would have none of it.

"No," he continued, "Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Gogol."

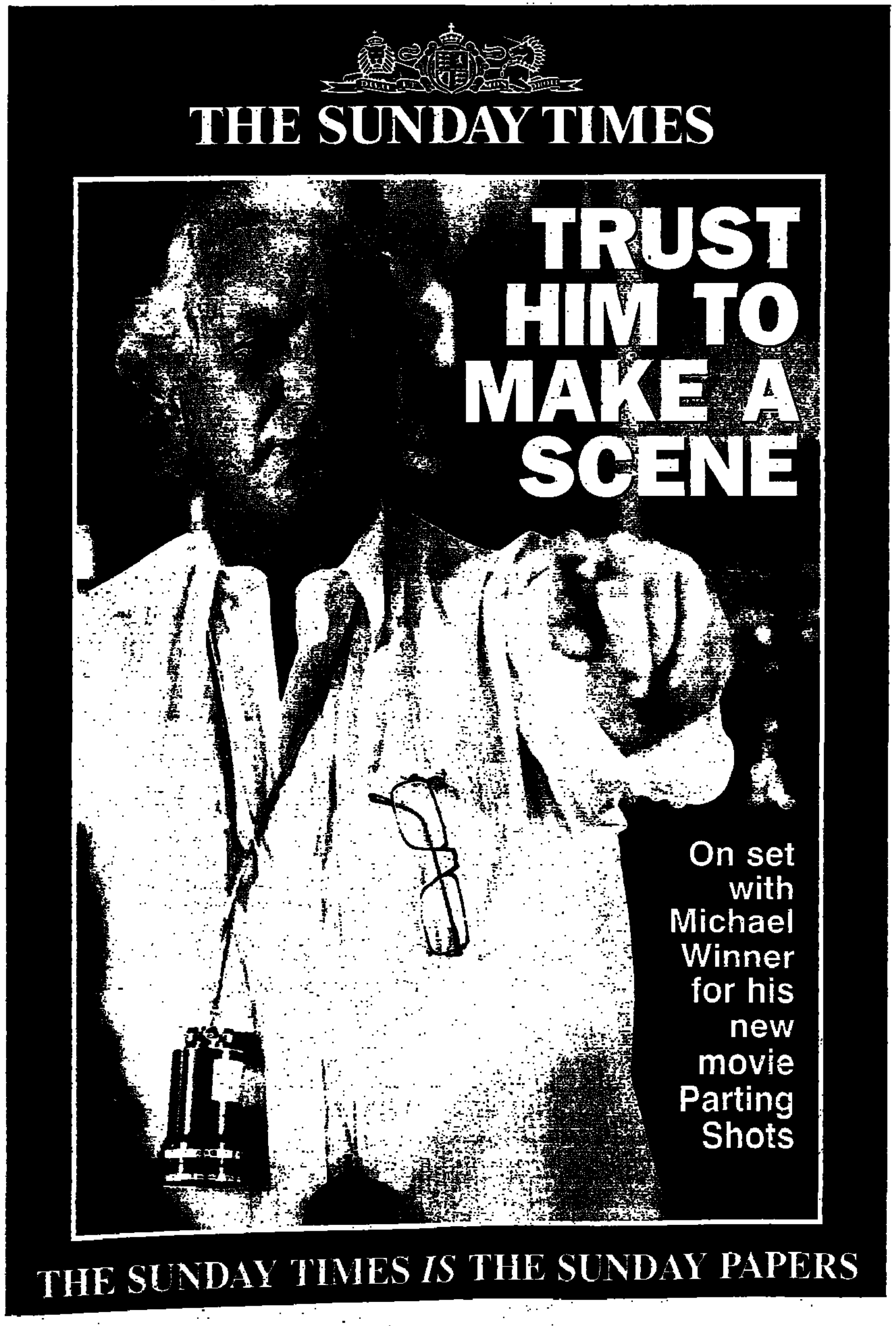
"Yes," said the interviewer, "but what about contemporary Russia?"

"I'm sorry," boomed Sir Michael. "I can't help you there."

There is something of the grand Victorian patriarch about Michael Caine. Tall and intimidatingly vigorous, he has a a mischievous sense of humour and the kind of stutter that was once likened to the sound of a battered Morris Oxford refusing to start on a cold February morning.

Without his stubborn determination, the Russian Booker would not exist. Yet Sir Michael is over 70 and "his" prize may eventually have to break free from foreign influence, becoming fully Russian. Sir Michael almost conceded as much in his short speech at the award dinner: "The boat is fully launched and ready to go out alone into the heavy, wild seas of fiction."

All that is missing is a modern Dostoevsky to document Russia's contemporary extremity.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Why heat in the bedroom is best for the chest

Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on the misdiagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Department of Health guidance on the early symptoms of bowel cancer, abnormalities of the genitals, and the causes of recurrent nosebleeds

CORBIS-BETTMANN

Long-term smoking can lead to chronic bronchitis which, in turn, can result in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

The jolly old man in the gas industry's advertisement on television is so obviously thriving in his centrally heated house that it is rather a pity that he later ruins all the benefits by walking out into the snow.

Brisk, but not violent, exercise, is an important ingredient in a healthy lifestyle, but it should not be taken by older people in extreme temperatures. Even the middle-aged should not allow themselves to become chilled for more than 20 minutes.

The gas industry will be delighted to read the latest research, reported in the journal *GP* and carried out at the London Chest Hospital. This study showed that increasing the bedroom temperature of patients with chronic chest troubles did more to keep them healthy than antibiotics.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), is a chronic chest condition in which the flow of air into and out of the lungs is persistently, partially, impeded. The degree of obstruction is measured by using a spirometer. Patients take a deep breath and then blow as long and as hard as possible into the machine. This allows the capacity of their lungs, and the patency of the bronchial tubes leading to them, to be assessed.

COPD is often the result of chronic bronchitis and emphysema. In chronic bronchitis the bronchial tubes have suffered from prolonged exposure to tobacco smoke or other irritants, or may have been subject to recurrent infections. But whatever the cause, the end result is that the walls of the bronchi are narrowed, have undergone structural changes, and produced an excessive amount of secretion. Emphysema is the over-expansion of the air spaces in the spongy lungs so that there is a reduction in the surface area of the lung through which oxygen may be absorbed.

The old, heavy smoker, spitting and wheezing in the corner, is almost certainly suffering from COPD. Doctors divide these patients into two types; blue bloaters and pink puffers. The blue bloaters are getting so little oxygen into their lungs that their blood is not properly oxygenated and they are slightly cyanosed in that their noses, lips and fingers have a bluish tinge. The patients are also often overweight, and their legs and feet are frequently swollen due to heart failure, secondary to their lung disease. The pink puffers are still coping with their COPD and maintain a natural pink complexion by breathing more quickly. These are the chesty people who get out of breath even when taking the exercise required in normal living.

This week a committee of the British Thoracic Society produced recommendations for the better treatment of COPD. The symptoms, coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and increased secretions, are common.

Every year, one in 25 of the patients on the average GP's list will need treatment. It has similar symptoms to asthma but needs slightly different treatment and has a very different outlook.

The essential feature of asthma is inflammation of the airways. Its symptoms tend to be intermittent and are usually reversible. More than 50 per cent of adult asthmatics have a history of allergy, they respond well to steroids, but not to the anti-cholinergic medicines prescribed for breathlessness. Conversely, patients with COPD are usually elderly and ex-smokers; the symptoms are persistent and progressive and they respond badly to steroids but well to the anti-cholinergics. More than 26,000 people die from COPD in England and Wales each year, whereas 1,700 die from asthma.

A major conclusion of the committee is that GPs should make more use of the spirometer, and that patients should be routinely tested for pulmonary function. In this way early, mild cases of COPD may be diagnosed and suitable preventive measures may be initiated.

The peak flow meter, which is widely used, is admirable so far as it goes, but it is not the ideal tool for diagnosing COPD, which experts feel is as neglected, misdiagnosed and under-treated as asthma was 20 years ago.

Guidelines for bowel cancer

Not only are general practitioners receiving the latest views on chest disease from the British Thoracic Society, but the Department of Health has also recently issued guidance on ways to improve the outcome in colorectal cancer, or cancer of the large bowel.

Colorectal cancer kills 17,000 people in England and Wales each year and is the second most common cause of death from cancer; overall, it is the sixth most common cause of death.

In the United Kingdom treatment is less successful than in France, Germany, most other European countries or the United States. The US has the best survival rate where 62 per cent of the patients who are diagnosed will survive, compared to Britain where only 41 per cent will live. One of the ten main recommendations is that people in Britain should be as aware of the early symptoms of colorectal cancer as those who live abroad.

The British have always found foreigners' preoccupation with their bowel function slightly quaint and very repugnant, but if their attitude and conversation improves the chances of surviving cancer of the colon by 50 per cent it may be forgivable.

The symptoms that patients must watch for are changes in bowel habit, which may be either diarrhoea or constipation, or one or the other alternating, or bleeding. Rectal bleeding should not be attributed to haemorrhoids until possibly more important causes have been excluded.

Pain is not usually an early feature of colorectal cancer and only becomes a prominent aspect of the disease when it is very advanced, but tenesmus, the sensation that the bowels have been incompletely emptied, is commonly experienced.

Many patients are seen by their doctors because they have been feeling unusually tired and have lost weight. In these cases anaemia may also be present. But all these symptoms represent late disease and the patient should have been to the surgery earlier.

Most cancers of the colon grow slowly, which had led the Americans to suggest that the best way of making an early diagnosis is through regular routine examinations. A second major recommendation by the Department of Health is that the UK should have better facilities for endoscopic investigations, and that GPs should have easier access to them.

Once diagnosed, the Department of Health suggests that colorectal cancer should be managed by designated multi-disciplinary teams, and that the surgeons in the team should be able to demonstrate a good immediate result and a low recurrence rate. Pathologists should give a comprehensive report so that the surgeons' record in achieving complete removal of the cancer can be assessed.

Local recurrence of cancer of the rectum is reduced by 40 per cent if the patient is treated with radiotherapy one week before the operation. This, the Department of Health suggests, should become routine unless there is a good reason why it is contraindicated. Those patients with a high risk of local recurrence should also be considered for post-operative radiotherapy. All patients who have radiotherapy should have access to an oncology nurse who is specially skilled in cancer care.

The survival rate in those patients whose tumours are well advanced at the time of diagnosis is improved by 6 per cent if they also have chemotherapy. This should be considered for all these patients who are strong enough to tolerate its side-effects. This recommendation will mean providing units who have adequate facilities, including oncologists, specialist nurses and pharmacists and a 24-hour emergency service.

Nose for trouble

SIR DAVID FROST recently continued bravely with his television programme despite a profuse nosebleed. Although nosebleeds are associated with childhood games in the playground, they become increasingly common with advancing age, and the older the patient gets the harder they are to stop.

The cause of spontaneous nosebleeds is usually of no great medical significance. It is often no more than damage to blood vessels in the mucus membranes made vulnerable by a cold. Recurrent nosebleeds, however, should be investigated. A prominent blood vessel may be the answer, and these can be cauterised. Sometimes they are the result of high blood pressure or a malignancy in the nasal passages or sinuses, when the bleeding is a watery, bloody discharge from one nostril only.

First-aid measures involve asking the patient to lean forward and to nip the nose at the junction of the bone and cartilage while breathing through the mouth. After about 20 minutes the grip can be relaxed, and the bleeding should have stopped. If the bleeding persists, seek medical advice.

Two of a kind

AFTER 25 years of working in a genito-urinary clinic treating venereal disease, I thought I had come across every variation of the male anatomy. However, the *International Journal of Clinical Practice* has proved me wrong with its report that one in five million babies is born with either a double penis or clitoris.

In men, as in shotguns, the double barrels may lie side by side or one above the other — as in the type of gun that is favoured by Americans and clay-pigeon shooters, the people at James Purdey & Sons tell me.

The condition in men is known as diphallus. The two penises may be of identical size and shape or one may be smaller. Often the division is incomplete. The *Journal's* case concerned a boy operated on at the age of nine whose diphallus was corrected by the removal of one penis, so that he was left with a single urethra, which, it appeared, was fully functional.

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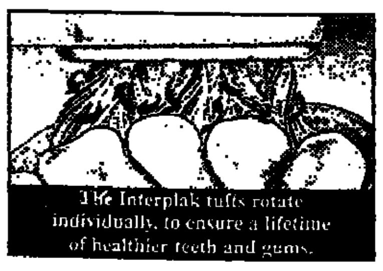

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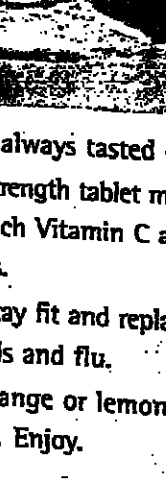
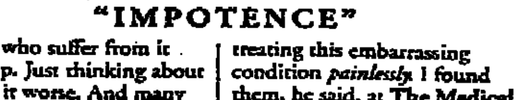
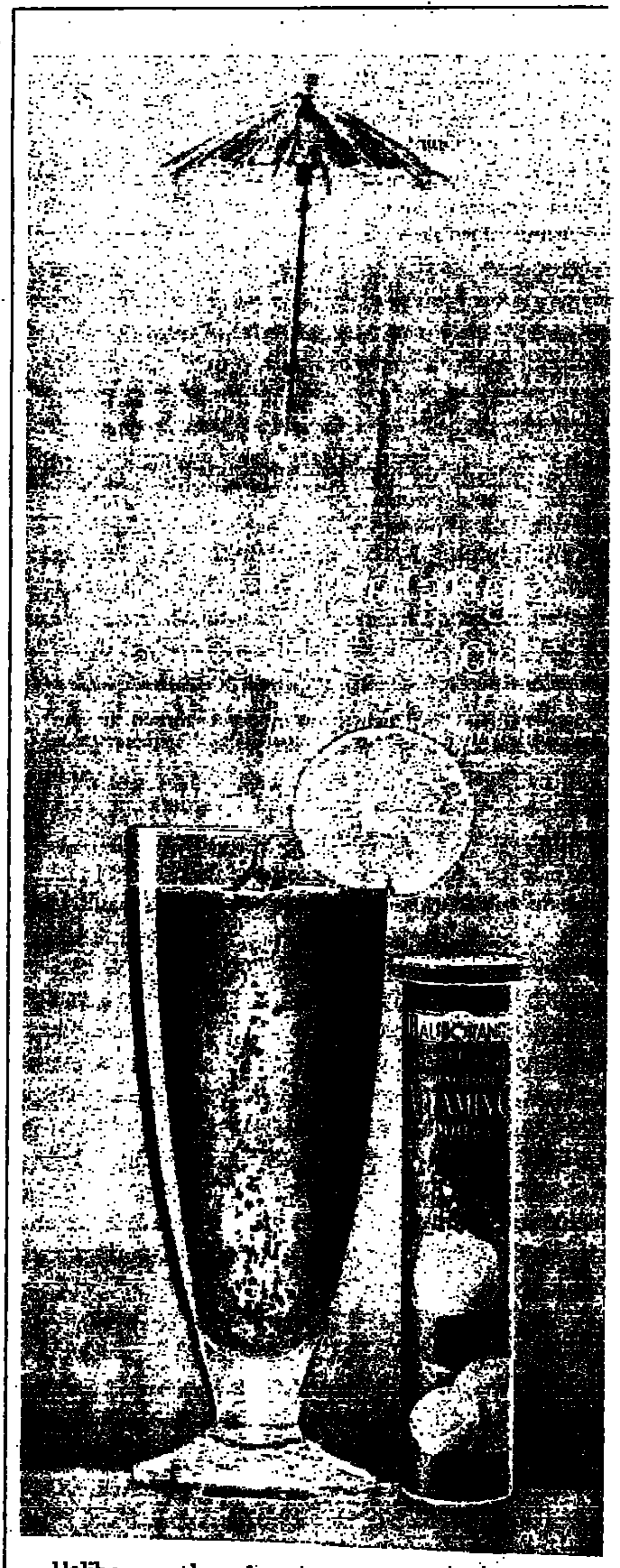




You are not alone – 54% of men suffer from impotence at age 58

What my older, wiser brother said about "IMPOTENCE"

People who suffer from it get fed up. Just thinking about it makes it worse. And many prescribed drugs have adverse effects. But there are qualified people who now specialise in treating this embarrassing condition *painlessly.* I found them, he said, at The Medical Centre in Weymouth Street, London W1N 3PA. Call them on 0171 637 2018, now!



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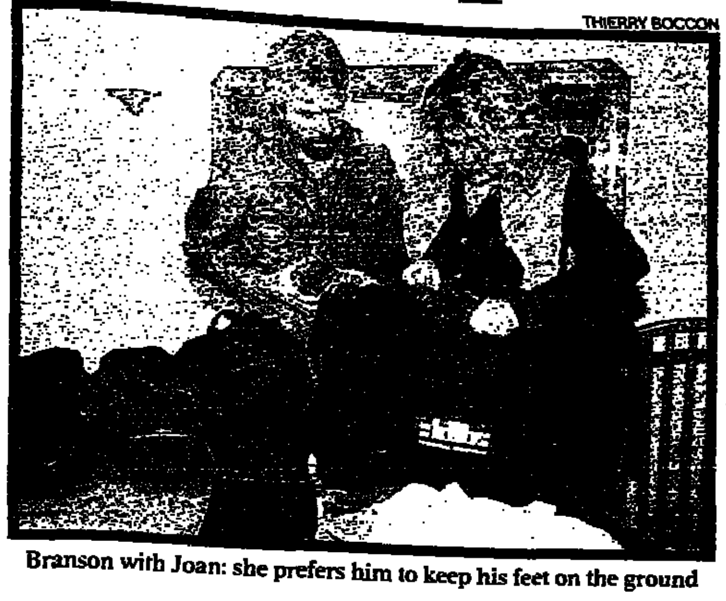
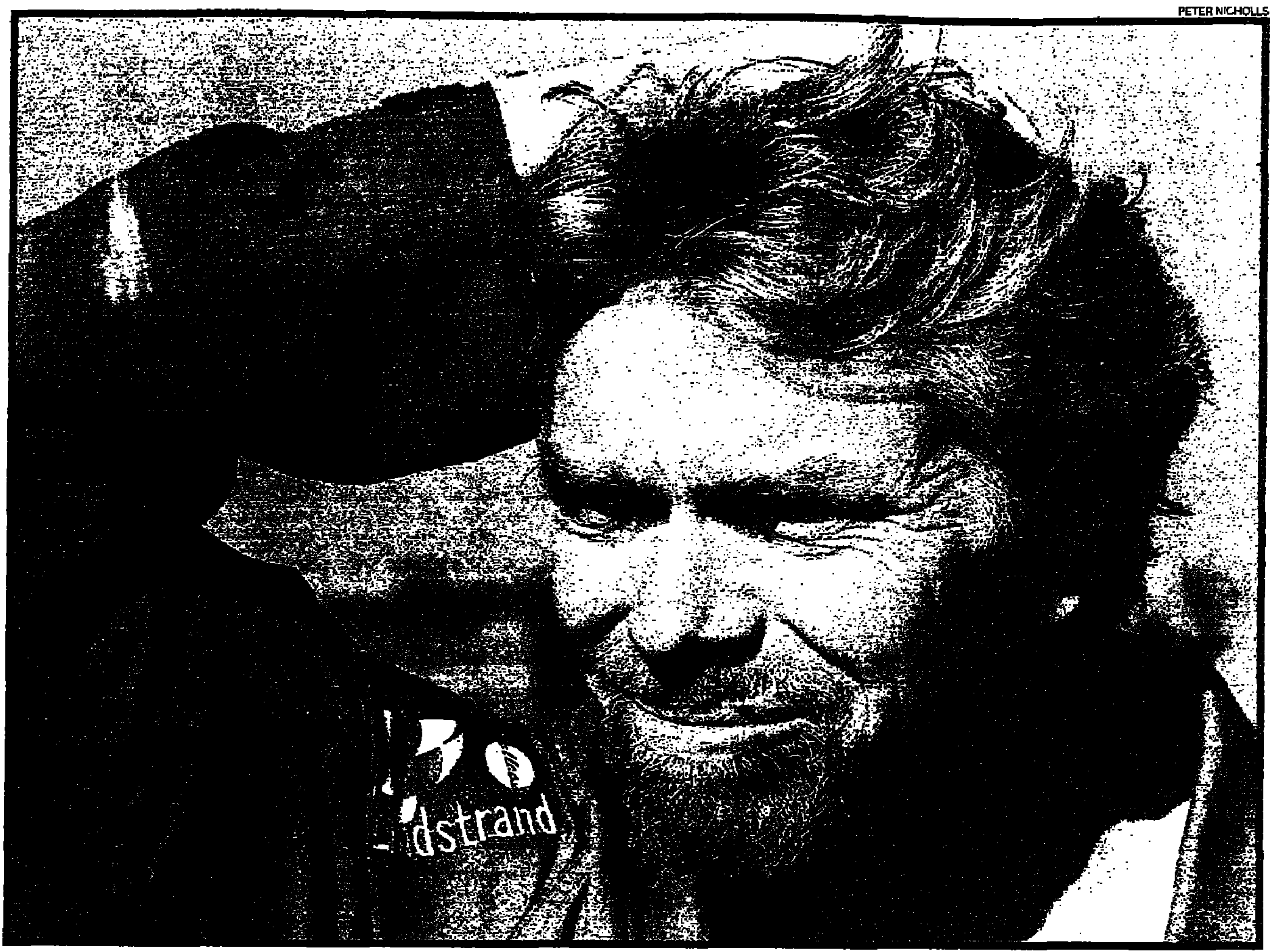


Branson with Joan: she prefers him to keep his feet on the ground

PETER NICHOLLS



Richard Branson, high-flyer in his professional and personal lives: "I permit myself to be down for only a few seconds. Anything else is self-indulgence, and wasteful"

Richard Branson's dream to circle the globe in a balloon may have been scuppered again, but he refuses to wallow in self-pity. By **Andrew Pierce**

Within hours of the 223ft *Virgin Global Challenger*'s dramatic but premature departure from Morocco, Richard Branson was sipping champagne with his wife, Joan, seemingly without a care in the world. The multimillionaire businessman further underlined his capacity to stay cool under fire when he was the life and soul of a pre-planned party to celebrate a successful launch at the Moroccan airforce base at the foot of the Atlas Mountains.

But beneath the calm exterior Mr Branson, 47, was racked by anxiety and despair as he surveyed the wreckage of his ten-year dream to be the first person to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon.

The mood of despondency did not last long. Crises are a regular event in the life of the man who created the Virgin empire, which boasts 200 companies, employs 18,000 people and is the biggest private business fiefdom in Britain.

"There is a thin line between being an entrepreneur and being an adventurer," Mr Branson said yesterday as he directed from the Moroccan airbase the diplomatic offensive needed to retrieve the stricken balloon from Algeria.

"In business, I confront crises all the time. I have learnt to deal with them by taking them in my stride. The same rule applies to ballooning or any other adventure. Fortunately, I was brought up to look on the positive side of life. Going for it has become my motto.

"I permit myself to be down for only a few seconds. Anything else is self-indulgence, and wasteful."

Balloon over the dunes

Despite the brave words, Mr Branson admitted he was shattered when the call came through to his hotel suite informing him that the balloon had gone without him. The suite, as usual, was crowded with family and friends. He had been putting the finishing touches to his will. He was about to write letters to his daughter, Holly, 16, and son, Sam, 12, with strict instructions that they were not to be opened unless he failed to return. When the bad news came, there was little time to wallow in self-pity.

Outside, the world's media waited. The short drive to the airfield felt like the longest of his life. He took Sam with him for comfort. The closeness of the Branson family is an integral part of his success.

"Holly and Sam are at an age now when they want me to succeed and when they would like to be beside me as I take off on my adventures. I am not so sure about Joan. I know she was very happy to have me in bed beside her that night," he said.

Joan was said to have begged him to abandon his plans to capture what the Royal Geographical Society described as the last great aviation challenge when the first attempt last January nearly ended in catastrophe. The Challenger was plummeting to the ground at a rate of 1,000ft a minute and levelled off just 30 seconds from impact as the three-man crew prepared for certain death.

Now, clutching a mug of steaming coffee in the scorching Moroccan sun and wearing his trademark green flying suit, Mr Branson declined to be drawn on whether Joan had asked him not to go. "Let's just say Joan is happier when my feet are firmly on the ground," he said.

It was not the first time Mrs Branson had feared losing the father of her two children. During his first attempt to cross the Pacific in a boat, disaster struck when the craft capsized. Mr Branson was plunged into the freezing water with Sir Chay Blyth, the record-breaking round-the-world yachtsman. "I took my cue from Chay. He had been in that situation many times. We sang songs and joked about which vessel would pick us up." A Jamaican banana boat eventually came to the rescue.

Despite the pressures of an 18-hour working day that would make most people age prematurely, Mr Branson remains stubbornly youthful. He is a relentless keep-fit fanatic. He plays tennis, jogs and skis. But in the pink-walled city of Marrakesh there has been little time to unwind.

Rory McCarthy, the original co-pilot in the balloon, gave him a massage yesterday morning. His choice of friends is another sign that Branson thrives on living dangerously — Mr McCarthy is a world record skydiving champion. Mr Branson is also accomplished in the field but not as skilled as his friend, as the cuts and bruises on his arms testify after a particularly bumpy landing during training over the Atlas Mountains at the weekend.

> 'I've learnt to deal with crises by taking them in my stride'

On Tuesday night, when hopes had soared that the balloon would be found and repaired in time for another assault on the record, Mr Branson was in the Sheraton Hotel bar, the mission headquarters, buying drinks for everyone.

The sense of shock that had overwhelmed him in the morning was gone. "I knew we were back in the hunt. We had used our Lear jet to fly low over the top of the balloon as it drifted towards Algeria to try to force it down. It was a successful operation. It would have been easier all round if the balloon had not crossed into Algeria but that is another problem we will surmount." Luckily, only three weeks ago Mr Branson and his team dined with the Algerian Ambassador in London, a contact who will have proved invaluable.

"It is a terrible cliché but I do love a challenge. I like the feeling of adrenalin coursing through my veins. I have no intention of slowing down. Whether it is buying a railway or taking on an airline competitor, I want to succeed and provide the best service."

Opinion polls regularly make Mr Branson the favourite choice for Mayor of London, or president if Britain took the republican route. Even the carelessness of losing the world's biggest balloon, 1½ times the size of Nelson's Column, has not dented his popularity or reputation. But he is under no illusions about the transient nature of popularity and success. "All role models eventually screw up in one way or another, particularly in Britain, where there is a custom of building people up to knock them down again. It is something one has to accept. But I think the verdict is: So far so good."

'As I sang my song, Mick made obscene noises'

She was the little rich girl who made Jagger jealous. But now all Twinkle wants is to stay lucky. Interview by **Bill Frost**

Gazing soulfully into the middle distance from beneath her fringe, the tiny blonde recalls how Mick Jagger and Brian Jones fought for her favours on a flight from Dublin. Twinkle, whose 1964 hit single *Terry* was vilified in the House of Lords and briefly banned by television producers, was flattered by their attentions but horrified by their swearing.

The mawkish ballad she wrote about a fantasy biker boyfriend killed in a road crash took her from Queen's Gate School in Knightsbridge to number four in the charts, where she stayed for 15 weeks. Once the 16-year-old's classmates had included Camilla Parker Bowles, now she blushed as rival Rolling Stones courted her.

"I was sitting next to Brian. Actually he was holding my sick bag — there was quite a bit of turbulence," she says. "I thought he was very nice. Then Mick came over and angrily said 'you're sitting next to my girl'. The language became *appalling*."

Despite her pouting image (some compared Twinkle — real name Lynn Ripley — to Bardot), she admits she was an innocent abroad in the 1960s and had no idea the two Stones were wrangling over who was to seduce her. In fact Jagger's fury at failing to capture his prey was vented later, in 1964, when she appeared in a *New Musical Express* poll winners' concert at Wembley. "As I sang my best line, 'please wait at the gates of Heaven for me, Terry', he picked up a microphone behind the curtain and made obscene noises. I nearly killed him afterwards."

She attempts a smile before topping up an already lethal vodka from a bottle she has brought with her to the wine bar where we meet. "I am nervous about interviews," she explains. "In the Sixties I was doing a bottle of Scotch and about 80 cigarettes a day. But I never did like drugs, even though everyone else seemed to. They made me fall asleep or feel ill."

Time has been relatively kind to Twinkle. Her roots may need attention and the 1960s costumes may pinch a little now, but there are still traces of the teenager who features in Channel 4's *Brit Girls* series a week on Saturday.

"I have never had a facial or had my legs waxed. I am content with myself and my life," she says, topping up her vodka again. "I suppose I have been very lucky — there was always a safety net, my parents, my silver spoon. I didn't need the money; the £15,000 I made from *Terry* (£150,000 today) went in a couple of weeks. I still spend for Britain. If I have £5,000, I will spend £10,000. And sometimes I just don't have a clue where it goes."

Brought up in Surrey by parents who could afford servants, Twinkle was not in awe of anyone at school, except perhaps the young Camilla. "I remember her well," she says. "She was very attractive and even then she had an astonishing aura of leadership. I resented any goody-goody, but not her. She was fun and definitely no angel.

"She always wore that Sloaney gear, the junior version of twinset and pearls. Meanwhile I was getting into a PVC mac and make-up."

PETER NICHOLLS

Twinkle: "There was always a safety net — my parents"

Twinkle was 14 when she wrote *Terry* and on the point of being expelled from Queen's Gate. The teachers thought her bright but rebellious, and her dirge for a dead biker could have done little to change their opinion. The song was described as "dangerous drivel" by Lord (Ted) Willis, the novelist and television scriptwriter, and banned for a while on the pop show *Ready Steady Go*.

Inspiration for *Terry* came to Twinkle as she sat in the back of her parents' chauffeur-driven limousine on the A3. "These boys on big bikes came by and everything flowed from that image. There never was a real Terry in my life — I wasn't interested in sex then, certainly not with boys who greased their hair back and drove motorcycles. Anyway, my parents would not have allowed it."

Her success was short-lived; a follow-up single hovered briefly in the lower levels of the charts before Twinkle gave up on the pursuit of teenage stardom.

"I was glad, really. I used to suffer from stage fright and touring was dreadful sometimes. I suppose I just didn't like working much. I kept up with the club scene where I saw old friends such as Brian Jones, Peter Noone of Herman's Hermits and Eric Burdon of the Animals. One night George Harrison asked me to go to Paris with him for the weekend but my parents said I couldn't.

"I moved into a flat owned by Daddy in Hampton, and he gave me an allowance. I lived there with a housekeeper, seven dogs and a pig and spent my time writing songs and taking in stray animals."

Twinkle's eyes mist over at the mention of her animals — and it's time for another vodka. "At the moment I have two Dobermans, three ducks, eight pigeons, lots of rescued birds, a guinea pig, a rat and my fish. Next to my husband and children, they mean the world to me."

She says she fell in love instantly with the man she was to marry — Graham Rogers, one-time star of the *Milk Tray* television adverts. They met by chance in a café and she pursued him for three months. Last March they celebrated their silver wedding anniversary.

"The marriage has worked because we accept each other's faults," she says. "I smoke and drink too much, and he doesn't. I'm useless in the house and he is neat and tidy. He does a bit of DIY but never completes the job. Apart from that he is perfect.

"Michael, my 20-year-old son, wants to follow me into the music business — in fact he has done a techno version of *Terry* using my vocals. Who knows, it could be lucky for him too."

● Brit Girls, *Channel 4, Saturday, December 20, 8.30pm.*

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Where things can only get worse

Tim Congdon on Europe's demographic timebomb

Never-ending economic growth is an assumption of our age. People know that living standards are higher now than 20 or 30 years ago, they believe that they are still rising — and they expect them to go on doing so. These beliefs and expectations are shared by the entire industrial world.

In qualification, there is a widespread recognition that the pace of economic growth will be held back over the next two generations by the "greying" of the populations of Europe, North America and Japan. But almost no one thinks that this trend will be accompanied by falls in national output and a decline in living standards.

For some European countries, the assumption of never-ending growth is, however, very questionable. A strong argument can be made (if certain well-established social and economic trends persist over the next generation) that the output of significant nations will not only cease to grow by the 2 or 3 per cent a year to which they are accustomed, but will start to fall. Such declines would not be cyclical fluctuations around an upward trend: they would constitute the trend itself.

The calculations behind this startling conclusion are mechanical. The key is to remember that, in any country, output per head of population ("living standards") depends on three influences: output per head of the employed population ("productivity"), the proportion of the population of working age actually in work ("participation") and the ratio of the working age population to the total population ("demographics"). If each of these three influences is analysed, a risk that living standards might fall over extended periods — five years or more — can be identified in France, Italy and other European countries.

The first consideration is productivity growth. Postwar Europe achieved a spectacular advance in productivity, often at a rate of more than 4 per cent a year, as its companies copied and sometimes caught up with superior American technology. But the scope for catching-up is much less today. Indeed, across the industrial world output per person employed has been rising at only 1 to 1.5 per cent a year over the past decade. Despite much waffle about "the digital productivity miracle", or "the cybernetic revolution", the evidence from official statistics is that productivity growth is decelerating.

Secondly, trends in participation have varied sharply between the main industrial nations. In America and Japan more people between the ages of 15 and 64 are in work today than in the late 1970s. (In America this has been due entirely to a remarkable rise in female participation). But in the four large European economies — Germany, the UK, France and Italy — participation in the labour market has been falling. In France and Italy the ratio of men and women of working age actually in employment dropped by 0.6 per cent a year between 1979 and 1994.

In this respect America and Japan have clearly been performing better than Europe. A plausible explanation is that Europe has been handicapped by higher levels of government spending (particularly on social benefits), taxation and social security contributions or, in a phrase, by "the welfare state". Some aspects of the welfare state, such as entitlement to generous pensions in early retirement, have undoubtedly discouraged men in France and Italy from working when they reach their fifties and sixties.

If participation in France and Italy continues to fall by 0.6 per cent a year, the implied drop in employment will be a significant brake on living standards. It almost cancels the gain from an assumed productivity growth of 1 per cent a year.

Finally, what about demographics? For the next 15 years the size of the population of working age is already known, because all new entrants to the workforce have already been born. Thereafter population trends are sufficiently stable to allow fairly precise forecasts for several decades. (Immigration is the main imponderable).

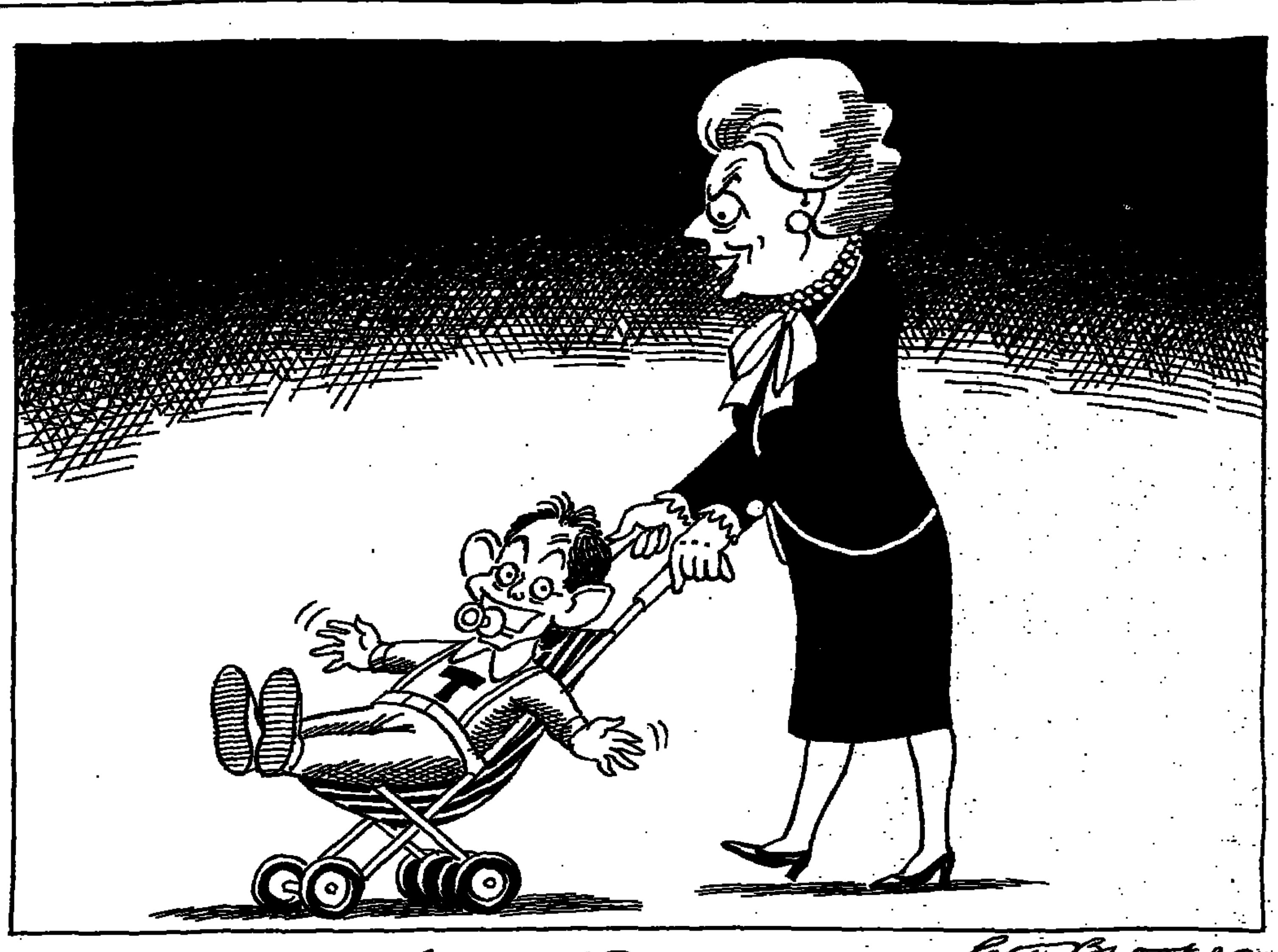
The World Bank estimates that over the next 40 years the proportion of people of working age to the total population will fall steadily in Japan, Germany and Italy. In Italy the fall is to run at 0.5 per cent a year between 2015 and 2020, rising to 0.7 per cent a year between 2020 and 2035. If productivity growth were 1 per cent a year, the combined effect of demographics and the deterioration in labour force participation would cause Italian living standards to fall for a period of 20 years or, in other words, for virtually a generation.

Italy is the most extreme example of the dangers that lie ahead. But in all the major countries the interaction of worsening demographics and decelerating productivity growth points to long periods of stagnant living standards. America and Japan show signs of using their working-age population more fully. But in Europe labour-force participation and employment are deteriorating.

If over generous welfare systems are the source of the declines in labour-force participation, then they are unsustainable in the modern European state. Either the welfare state has to be abandoned, or economic growth comes to a halt.

The first 50 years after the Second World War were — like the first Antonine age, described in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* — a long period of growing prosperity and social peace. But the second Antonine age is now over. In the next 50 years the nation states of modern Europe will have to break the promises given to their social security systems, so that the incentives to remain in work remain strong.

If labour-force participation continues to slide, demographic certainties dictate that the living standards of Europe's citizens will enter an extended period of decline.



SINGULAR MOTHER

Public and private trusts

Geoffrey Robinson has become an embarrassment to the Prime Minister

William Rees-Mogg

I have been asking some City people who have dealt with overseas trusts what they think about Geoffrey Robinson's interest in a Guernsey trust. On one point they are unanimous. A discretionary offshore trust has great tax advantages; it does not automatically have to pay United Kingdom taxes on income, capital gains or inheritance. As the Orion Trust has assets of more than £12 million, it can be assumed that the marginal rate of these taxes would be 40 per cent were the money held on the mainland. Taxes are payable only when funds are remitted to the United Kingdom beneficiary. A Guernsey trust is therefore a very tax efficient way of holding assets. I do not think that such a trust could be set up without the intention of avoiding tax.

Indeed, offshore trusts in tax havens are so efficient that the Treasury has done everything in its power to limit their use. In the old days, before restrictions were introduced, they were far more common than they are now. Nowadays it is necessary for the person who originally settles the trust to be domiciled overseas. In this case the original settlor was a Belgian, Mme Joska Bourgeois, who died in 1994. The trustees are independent in law, but they are normally lawyers or accountants whose profession it is to run such trusts. So long as the original settlor is alive, they usually take instructions from that person, or from someone nominated by the settlor. In practice, when the settlor dies, the trustees take instructions from someone nominated in the trust deed, or from the person regarded as the key figure in the trust. They have their professional reputation to maintain, and do not suddenly start behaving as though they were not answerable to anyone.

In 1996 the trustees of Orion Trust started buying some £10 million of shares in Transtec, a business with which Geoffrey Robinson is associated. By that time Mme Bourgeois was dead; the trustees cannot have been acting on her instructions. The assumption must be that Geoffrey Robinson had some hand in suggesting or at least approving the transaction, though his precise relationship with it has not been established. The question of the degree of influence he has with the trustees is obviously relevant. So far the trustees themselves have remained anonymous.

Trusts of this character are not illegal: although some people would argue that they are against the public interest because they avoid the payment of tax that might otherwise be due. I would argue that they tend to benefit society by protecting capital from an inappropriate system of taxation, but this is a minority view. The Labour Party, even in its new Labour form, is hostile to all such schemes of avoidance, and it must be admitted that few of these schemes are really organised at arm's length, whatever their formal legal structure.

Geoffrey Robinson has three possible courses of action. He can continue to brazen the matter out, refusing to give a full and frank account of his financial arrangements, and threatening libel actions against the press. Newspapers have little reason to fear these threats, since, on the recent precedent of Jonathan Aitken, he would probably have to resign if he wished to pursue these actions. In any case, he would almost certainly have to make full disclosure of his financial arrangements in court. However legal these are, he might not wish to be cross-examined about them. Whoever won such a libel action, the main beneficiary would be the Conservative Party, since Geoffrey Robinson would have hung himself on a very public gibbet.

His second course would be to make a full public explanation of all his financial arrangements. He would need to explain everything that had happened over a period of years. Here, his difficulty would be with his own party. The Labour Party has no sympathy with tax avoidance, however legal it may be. People of my views think that the State is too large, public expenditure is an excessive overhead on the economy, and that all taxes on savings and capital fall on investment and economic growth. We may regard millionaire tax minimisers such as Mr Robinson as patriotic entrepreneurs who save capital, reinvest it, and thereby perform a public service. But the Labour Party has never been willing to accept this argument, and does not do so now. Even the new Labour Government has raised taxes on savings by the abolition of Advance Corporation Tax; it threatens to do so again by the £50,000 limit on Isas, for which Mr Robinson is responsible as a minister.

Indeed, the £50,000 limit sticks in the gullet. Mr Robinson is a beneficiary of a tax efficient trust, his own personal Isa, currently worth £12 million or more. He proposes that the little man (or woman) should have a £50,000 limit on his Isa. I do not think that savings and capital ought to be taxed at all; I am an expenditure tax man. But even I am aghast at the idea that one man's Isa should be capped at £50,000, while the responsible minister's own offshore Isa is left uncapped at £12 million.

The third course is resignation. It would be a pity, of course. Though his Isa scheme seems half-baked, civil servants say that Mr Robinson has been a breath of fresh air in Whitehall. Fancy having a minister who understands how industry works. It may even be good to have a minister in the Treasury who understands how offshore trusts work, though perhaps not. After the 1929 crash, Roosevelt put in Joe Kennedy to block all the loopholes Kennedy had used himself as the most ruthless of Wall Street speculators.

The arguments for resignation are very strong. So long as Geoffrey Robinson remains in the Government the press will want more details about his trust arrangements; the repeated inquiries will embarrass him and the Government. He has not done anything illegal, but he did continue, as a Labour Member of Parliament, to benefit from a trust which the Labour Party would not countenance. His decision on the Isa limit does look like humbug: the £50,000 is absurdly restrictive. Invested in the FT100 Index, £50,000 would produce an income of £30 a week. Mr Robinson's little nest egg would produce an income of £7,200 a week; so long as it stays in Guernsey, it does not pay tax. The new Labour Government may think £30 a week is right for the people's savings, though even the single mothers are still going to get more than that.

There is another reason why Geoffrey Robinson should go. He is an embarrassment to the Prime Minister. Tony Blair is making the mistake of defending his friends, something no Prime Minister can afford to do. There is already a question mark over the new Government's sensitivity on financial issues. There have been the Labour local authority scandals; there have been the £1 million donations made by potential beneficiaries of public policy; there have been the extravagancies of the £1 billion Greenwich dome, and the £60,000 wallpaper for the Lord Chancellor's official residence; now we have Mr Robinson, who failed to disclose, but probably ought to have disclosed, his position as the potential beneficiary of a £12 million overseas discretionary trust.

The public does not distinguish carefully between tax avoidance and tax evasion; it does, however, expect a different and higher standard from ministers than from ordinary MPs, and higher standards from Members of Parliament than from ordinary businessmen.

In the last Parliament, Labour made a lot of the issue of sleaze. The picture was painted by the pointilliste method; there was a mid-life sex romp here, a child born outside wedlock there, a holiday at the Ritz, a brown envelope. Much of it was minor, hardly any of it was illegal. It is not illegal to stay at the Paris Ritz, even for free. It is not illegal to kiss a pretty girl in the park, even if she is not one's wife. The sums involved were small; no one went to prison. In the same way, the picture of Labour sleaze that is building in the public mind includes perfectly legal transactions, but the sums of money are far larger. I have never met Bernie Ecclestone but caution would have made me hesitate to take money from him, in case I raised expectations I would not wish to fulfil. Bernie Ecclestone does not strike me, from what I read about him, as a man who would give £1 million to the Labour Party because he had been reading Marx or Tawney. However legal Geoffrey Robinson's offshore trust may be, it is not suitable for a Labour minister; he ought to know that and so should the Prime Minister.

Warming to global change

The Kyoto fallacy, by Wilfred Beckerman

As had long been inevitable, the mountain of preparatory negotiations leading up to the Kyoto conference has produced a mouse. Green pressure groups will now protest that we have betrayed our obligations to future generations, making the same sort of dire predictions as did Tony Blair in an article on this page last Thursday.

But four key points need to be established in order to justify this dismay at the failure of Kyoto to produce really effective action to curb global carbon emissions. These are that predictions of significant climate change are reasonably reliable; such change would seriously damage future standards of living; the costs of preventing climate change are less than this likely damage; and any policies adopted do not hit the poor for the benefit of the rich.

In fact, only the first link in the chain has any strength at all. And even that is exaggerated by the vast scientific and bureaucratic establishment that is financing its research and building careers on the back of the threat of global warming.

As for the second point, Mr Blair's only evidence for his assertion that "... climate change ... will impose enormous human and business costs" is that it "could lead to an increase in stormy weather". But it could lead to fewer storms. Theoretically, the latter happens to be more likely. Even the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are neutral on the matter.

As for the more general effects of climate change, there is good reason to believe that, on balance, for the world as a whole, they would be beneficial. This is chiefly because global warming would increase food production. For example, regions would be opened up and growing seasons extended in vast areas, such as the northern states of the United States, Canada, Russia and China; higher carbon concentrations in the atmosphere would raise crop yields; for the world as a whole, global warming would mean more rain (or snow); and increasing cloud cover would mean that many parts of the world would be cooler during the day and warmer at night, leading to greater soil moisture. What is so bad about all that?

As for the argument that the costs of reducing carbon emissions will be minor, Mr Blair claims that the expansion of industries producing technologies for reducing carbon emissions or new forms of energy is not a cost, but a benefit. He writes that "we should see it as an opportunity for business and a means to create jobs". This is like claiming that if we were to enter a new Ice Age (as was being predicted by leading climatologists about 25 years ago), this would create lots of job opportunities for heating engineers and producers of thermal clothing (though few for refrigeration technicians and producers of swimsuits). So whether it is going to get hotter or colder it is good for creating job opportunities. Thus the worst scenario in Mr Blair's economics is when the climate stays the same.

The fallacy in Mr Blair's argument is that jobs are not created by moving people from one activity to another. If this were the case, nations could get rich very quickly just by making people change jobs more often. In fact, if the prevention of climate change involves giving fewer resources to producing goods that people want — food, clothing, housing, schools, hospitals, leisure and cultural facilities, and so on — then national income (and welfare) could fall even if total employment rose.

This is where we get to the equity aspect of the problem: who gains and who loses? Mr Blair avoids this altogether. If we accept the received wisdom on climate change, it will have no noticeable effect on the economies of advanced countries, where agriculture makes a negligible contribution to national income. The people who would lose most would be those whose economies are heavily dependent on agriculture. Most of them live in poor countries, such as China. So they — or rather their descendants — would be the main beneficiaries from measures to reduce climate change. But in a hundred years' time these beneficiaries will be nothing like as poor as are their ancestors in the Third World today.

Yet I have not noticed any mad rush by Western governments to improve the terrible environmental conditions in the Third World today. There is no army of bureaucrats, institutes and scientific research establishments devoted to seeking out opportunities for increasing the supply of cheap, clean drinking water, and decent sanitation, the absence of which causes so much death and suffering.

Thus the imposition of any burdens on people alive today — which will inevitably impinge on the poorest — in order to add a few percentage points to the incomes of their far richer descendants towards the end of the next century is an anti-egalitarian form of inverted ancestor worship, the irony of which will not be lost on the Chinese.

Dr Beckerman's most recent book is Small is Stupid *(Duckworth).*

Peace mission

A DUO who have long enjoyed a lively relationship, Lord St John of Fawsley and Baroness Thatcher, have been reunited because of the Falklands War. The peacemaker? Sir Denis Thatcher. Lord St John, who flourished as Arts Minister until "the Great M" tired of his bright plumage, has organised a competition to build the first monument to our 257 servicemen who perished. Today his Royal Fine Art Commission will announce the winning design from 73 entries for a new chapel at Pangbourne Nautical College. This follows fundraising dinners by the Baroness, who urged Sir Denis to become a trustee.

Plans were devised by Admiral Sir John (Sandy) Woodward, who led the task force to the South Atlantic, to move a Victorian Methodist Chapel from Salisbury. Lord St John declared this too dreary. The solution? A competition, the first organised by the commission since 1924, when it approved designs for the public telephone box. "It is important to commemorate the heroism of servicemen," Lord St John tells me. "I think even Robert Runcie (then Archbishop of Canterbury) would admit that his tribute rather missed the mood. This will be a fitting tribute." Has it been jolly linking up with "the blessed one"? "Sir Denis has been jumping around and has been most helpful. It has been a pleasure to deal with Margaret — as ever."

Peace in our time

● *GORDON BROWN snubbed John Birt by not attending the BBC DG's Christmas party at Broadcasting House. "He went to the GMTV party instead," says my man at No 11. "The Chancellor considers the station far more important than the Beeb."*

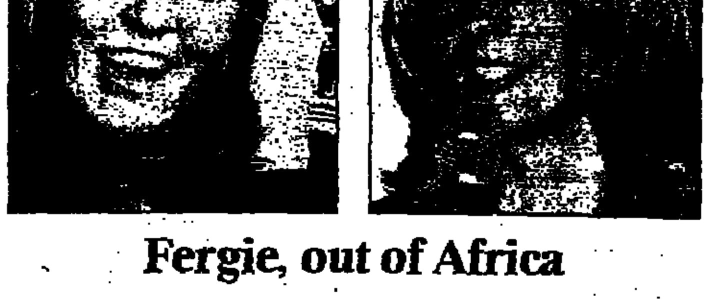
Champion

WITH a viciousness worthy of a crunching tackle from Roy Keane, seven publishing houses have been fighting a bruising contest to sign Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, to write his memoirs. Bids of up to £500,000 have been tabled. Publishers' expectations have been raised by the success of Kevin Keegan's book. Its title, *My Autobiography*, suggests limited literary promise, but it has topped the bestseller list for eight weeks. Comparing the level of support for Keegan's Fulham with that for Manchester United, Ferguson could make enough to retire from football. Perhaps he will embark on a political career, which I gather has been discussed with enthusiasm by senior Labour figures.

Shared days

A NAUGHTY plan has been hatched by David Heathcoat-Amory, Shadow Chief Secretary. He is to recruit friends who are shareholders in Barclays Bank and the Pru to join his guerrilla campaign against the institutions's bosses — who are still drawing corporate salaries while advising the Government. He wants shareholders to ask at the companies' AGMs whether Martin Taylor, Barclays' chief executive, and Peter Davis, the Man from the Pru, should still get paid. "I'm not against business helping Labour," explains Heathcoat-Amory. "But, these two have become effectively part-time." This could be fun.

"Brilliant, Pooh, you've beaten Branson's attempt"



Fergie, out of Africa

THE Duchess of York, above left, has been replaced on a forthcoming charity trip to Africa by Miss Lauren Booth, my new friend and younger sister of Cherie Booth. The pair met last month when Lauren, a former model and now a talented young journalist, interviewed the Duchess for that important social recorder, *OK!* magazine. Now Ms Booth has agreed to breeze off to Morocco in February to raise money for the Teenage Cancer Trust, a charity of which the Duchess is patron. "We're doing a sponsored walk of the Atlas mountains, but the Duchess can't make it," says a fund-raising skirt. "We're thrilled that Lauren's agreed to come. It will be terribly hard work but we've started training by walking backwards up Hampstead Heath."

● *LUNCH on Monday found the royal equerries gathered for their annual Christmas feed at that St James's trough, The Avenue. The festive spirit had clearly touched the Prince of Wales's equerry, Lt-Cdr John Lavery, who insisted on paying for the champagne — which he used to make a warm toast to the late Diana, Princess of Wales.*

JASPER GERARD

هكذا من الأول

Warming to global change

ON DEMOCRACY'S STEPS

Blair welcomes Adams to Downing Street

It is commonplace to say that Ireland's present discontents spring from too profound an attachment to history. But the pull of the past continues to *distort.* Gerry Adams' meeting with Tony Blair in Downing Street this week has been compared with that between David Lloyd George and Michael Collins. An earlier *radical* premier whom Middle England had learnt to love and an earlier republican warlord with whom the superficial had become infatuated ended a terrorist campaign *and laid the* basis for a settlement, albeit imperfect, which partitioned the island of Ireland.

The power of the parallel, and a fuzzy sense that in the past lies Ireland's *problems* and from some exorcism of past wrongs will come resolution, has led many to invest hopes for another peace deal in this meeting. We wish we could share those hopes. But Gerry Adams is no Michael Collins and Ireland's problems do not spring from partition. Before considering the extent of the danger in today's *tête à tête it is worth* underlining the difference between it and the Collins-Lloyd George meeting 76 years ago.

Michael Collins, although a republican terrorist, had a claim to legitimacy which Mr Adams cannot presume to make. The 1918 elections in Ireland gave Collins and his allies a mandate to speak, if not for a majority of the *island's people, then* certainly for the nationalists of the South. A process of polarisation by Collins and his comrades, although cynical, had seen them *supplant the representatives* of moderate nationalism and entitled them to negotiate for Irish independence.

All the major parties in the current Republic accept that the future of Ulster should be decided by a majority of its citizens. The IRA and its spokesman, Mr Adams, are alone in denying that democratic fact and retaining the right to use violence to undermine it. Michael Collins resorted to violence because democracy had not worked. Mr Adams sanctions its use because it works against him all too well.

Mr Adams and the IRA have, however, suspended their terrorist campaign to see if the political process can yield dividends which violence has not yet delivered. The invitation to Downing Street is one of the rewards they have sought for their forbearance and it has come. In an interview with our Chief Ireland Correspondent today, the Secretary of State, Dr Mowlam, argues that Sinn Fein *must* be treated *like* every other party in the talks if republicans are to ever behave as the other parties do.

Sinn Fein is not, and has not been treated, like any other party. *Its* military wing *has* maintained an armoury, and the potential to go back to war, throughout the talks. That threat, just as powerful for remaining veiled, *has led the* Government to waive a requirement for decommissioning and to subordinate the workings of justice to political calculation in the treatment of *terrorist prisoners.*

Defenders of the Government may argue that all these steps are necessary to bind Sinn Fein into the democratic process. But it *is worth asking just how committed to peace* Sinn Fein now is if it requires all these concessions to keep supporters sweet. There are ominous signs that elements within *republicanism itch to return to what the* Sinn Fein councillor Francie Molloy called "what we know best". He was not referring to handling welfare complaints.

The unhappiness with the peace process articulated by the sister of the hunger striker Bobby Sands is deeply felt in IRA heartlands such as South Armagh and East Tyrone. *Sinn Fein leaders complain that their* supporters are restive because the talks have made little progress. This is wholly hypocritical. Huge energy has been invested by David Trimble of the *UUP, Seamus* Mallon of the SDLP and the Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern in exploring possible future political structures. In contrast, Sinn Fein has prated about the need for movement without budging an inch from its absolutist demand that Britain abandons the democratic majority who favour the Union.

Today's meeting may just be an exercise in symbolism. But symbols matter where identity and allegiance drive men to arms. The sight of Mr Adams, on the doorstep of Downing Street, the demon king on the most prominent stage in democracy's theatre, is a dramatic concession. Mr Blair has already felt the anger of Ulster's majority after a previous meeting with Mr Adams. He must hope that history, although a fallible guide, proves a kinder judge.

SEVENTEEN-YEAR ITCH

Black and white in Zimbabwe unite against Mugabe

Harare returned to relative calm yesterday after an extraordinary clash between Robert Mugabe's Government and demonstrators led by the Zimbabwe Confederation of Trade Unions. Tear gas was used liberally, clubs were deployed at random by the police and Dumiso Dabengwa, the Home Affairs Minister, threatened to shoot those who continued *with this* largely peaceful protest. Some 17 years after the accession of Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe is courting economic collapse and social chaos. Affluent white *farmers and impoverished* black workers are, unusually, at one in their discontent.

The catalyst for this conflict was a set of drastic tax increases. These measures had *not received the support of Zimbabwe's* Parliament even though 147 of its 150 members are representatives of the ruling Zanu-PF party. Mr Mugabe used emergency powers to impose them regardless. The revenue has been sought to fund the pensions of war veterans. Their plight has become sensitive since it emerged that certain members of the Cabinet have received prompt payment of disability allowances while the system as a whole was in arrears. It now seems that the Government will withdraw or phase out this package, at least in its present form.

Mr Mugabe has blamed white farmers and the business sector for fomenting the discontent. This, as Morgan Tsvangirai, the Secretary-General of Zimbabwe's trade unions, has argued, is ridiculous. It has been the economic policies of the Government itself — and the corruption associated with it — that has obliged the IMF and World Bank to suspend support. Unemployment is, officially, at 33 per cent and interest rates at similar levels. It has long been Mr Mugabe's practice to blame Zimbabwe's remaining white citizens for crises of his own creation.

There is, outside of Mr Mugabe's personal circle, a remarkable degree of consensus on an alternative programme. The trade unions have called for cuts in state expenditure. Leading figures in Parliament have sought an overhaul of government ministries as well as a push for privatisation. The last point is especially relevant. In 1991, Mr Mugabe reluctantly agreed to shake up the state sector as the price of outside financial support. There have been precisely two *privatisations during this period:* Zambia, Zimbabwe's neighbour, has put 200 organisations on the market in the same time.

The President has appeared determined to *ignore this advice. His decision to appropriate* the property of white farmers was a desperate attempt to reclaim support. These farms currently account for 40 per cent of *national exports and 27 per cent of employment.* The Government does not have the resources to fund the resettlement of those who will be asked to take the land. The El Niño is *likely to deliver severe drought. All* ingredients for agricultural disaster are in place.

Mr Mugabe has alienated Parliament, large sections of his own party, the clear majority of the population, and overseas investors. He could and should relent and embrace radical change. Alternatively, he might move further towards outright personal dictatorship. Zimbabwe's future will be powerfully influenced by that choice.

DON'T MOCK TUDOR

A building can be bad, but seldom a whole architectural style

Bolsover District Council has refurbished a pile of old snobbery. When it gave Barratt the builder the planning *permission for* a housing development, it insisted that the houses were not mock Tudor. This proviso was mislaid; the builders' kits were muddled; and mock Tudor *is how the houses* have gone up. Yesterday the council decided "reluctantly" that it could not force Barratt to strip acres of cladding off new house fronts.

Tudor is the only native architectural style that is denigrated with the insult "mock". Nobody except a rival architect or a critic insults houses built in other styles as mock Queen Anne, pseudo Regency or pastiche Mies van der Rohe. But "mock Tudor" is the most popular style for domestic architecture in England. *Streets of half-timbered* semis and pubs with unnecessary cruck-trusses go up even in parts of Britain previously untouched by Tudor architecture. They represent a never-never *land of Olde* England and the historic turning-point when an Englishman's home became his own castle.

Stockbroker's (later mock) Tudor as insult was invented by Osbert Lancaster. What he had in mind was the shock of being confronted by 150 accurate reproductions of Anne Hathaway's cottage, each complete with central heating and garage. He mocked the latest methods of mass-production being used to turn out a stream of oak beams, leaded windows and small discs of bottle-glass. These were all structural devices that our ancestors lost no time in abandoning as *soon as they* knew how to do so.

Lancaster, like his friend John Betjeman, was fascinated by the architecture of the Victorians, the Edwardians and the Thirties. *Their fascination* began in *mockery.* But it ended in expert championship. All architecture is built on the foundations of a preceding style. Tudor domestic put Renaissance detail on *the ghost* of *Gothic* Perpendicular, and retreated from the great chamber into private spaces. It still represents one of an Englishman's ideals of home.

Almost half of genuine Tudor, although magnificent, was useless, for example its ornamental chimneys and beams. All surviving Tudor is "mock" in some ways, for example in the modern fashion of staining its timbers black instead of leaving the silver-grey of old oak. So Bolsover is wise to let sleeping *timbers lie, even if they are* zebra-painted cladding. It should be proud to recognise its new estate full of an Englishman's ancient ideal Homes from Home.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Questions on equity of means-testing for state pensions

From Mr Granville Davies

Sir, As the present Government has been elected by the balance of middle-class votes, Mr Blair would be ill advised to follow the advice in your leading article today, "Middle-class interest", to withdraw or means test the basic state pension.

That this pension is not funded by individual contributions was the result of a fraud perpetrated for political *reasons on the working population* when the pension was introduced.

For those whose National Insurance and general tax contributions over the years have provided current pensions for the elderly, and whose own basic pension entitlements will be assessed on their National Insurance contribution records, it is not easy to accept that the pension is really a welfare handout which the present working population can no longer afford.

For *many* in receipt of a *modest* occupational pension, the basic state pension is a significant addition to income which formed part of their original retirement planning. Will they now fall into the income trap between the feckless or disadvantaged who have made no provision for their future and the fat cats who have been *generously bribed to retire early?*

Will means-testing include capital investments as well as annuities and other forms of income? Will one be forced to sell one's home to qualify for a state pension? What of the expatriate working abroad who has chosen to pay voluntary NI contributions to cover missing years in order to preserve basic state pension rights? Will these now be forfeit?

This proposal is manifestly unfair, as a little more homework would *readily demonstrate.*

Yours truly,
GRANVILLE DAVIES,
5 Warren Wood, Warren Road,
Crowborough TN6 1TT.

From Mr Charles Davies

Sir, Means-testing the state pension would mean that, after paying in for 40 years, I shall be told that there is nothing in the pot for me as the Government has spent it all.

The last time this was done on a large scale was by Robert Maxwell. I well remember the fuss the then Opposition raised.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES DAVIES,
17 Cunningham Hill Road,
St Albans AL1 5BX.
December 8.

From Mr Mike Earnshaw

Sir, I would like to express my thanks for your candid leading article on the *welfare system. Having been born* into the welfare state in 1945 I have seen many changes over the years, very few of them good.

Please continue to press the Government for means-testing. If you have nothing to hide you have nothing to fear. Let the money go to the ones who really need it, not to those who *think* they are entitled to it.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE EARNSHAW,
4 Chapel Close,
Warden Hills, Luton LU2 7AG.
mearnshaw:kbnet.co.uk
December 9.

From Mrs Diana Titcomb

Sir, Your leader today applauds Tony Blair's plans to tax or means test state benefits in order that we can return to a system with welfare as a safety net rather than as an entitlement.

I agree that child benefit paid at the same rate, whether to lone parents without income or to *top-rate* taxpayers, is illogical and a waste of public funds. However, an elderly couple, neighbours of mine, who have saved all their working lives see friends, who have spent all they have earned and borrowed more, living an assured and sometimes more comfortable retirement, courtesy of the State.

I question the morality of this and suspect the proposed system will just discourage saving and frugality, thereby imposing a greater welfare burden.

Yours truly,
DIANA TITCOMB,
11 Burns Green,
Benington, Stevenage SGQ 7DA.
December 8.

'Two-flag' Gibraltar

From the Foreign Secretary

Sir, Today's joint letter from Michael Howard and George Young is characteristically misleading about the Government's policy towards Gibraltar.

Our position is clear. On Spanish proposals for joint sovereignty of Gibraltar, *there is no question of any* compromise on sovereignty. On Spanish integration into Nato, it seems to have escaped Messrs Howard and Young *that the Chief Minister of Gibraltar* welcomed the outcome of the Nato Defence Ministers' meeting on December 2 and said "the UK statement fully safeguards our position".

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN COOK,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
Whitehall, SW1A 2AH.
December 10.

Pakistan's democracy

From the High Commissioner for Pakistan

Sir, Your leading article of December 2, entitled "Islamabad on the brink", on the role of the military in Pakistan's politics was proven wrong within hours of its printing.

The Pakistan Army, a professional and efficient fighting force, has made very clear that promoting and protecting the Constitution and the democratic *system are central* to its core value.

It did not choose "the least worst option" (your description of an army takeover) but played a positive role in stabilising the situation. It demonstrated a commendable commitment to the supremacy of parliamentary democracy.

Christopher Thomas, in his report of December 3, writes that Pakistan "has moved a notch closer to becoming a failed state". How, pray, does he know — especially when the crisis is now over? The supremacy of Parliament, restored earlier this year and termed "a turning point for Pakistan's struggling democracy" by your newspaper (report, April 2), has sustained the test of time. How come that it is now seen as "what is left of a crumbling democracy"?

Yours faithfully,
MIAN RIAZ SAMEE,
High Commission for Pakistan,
35 Lowndes Square, SW1X 9JN.
December 4.

National symbols

From Ms Liz Exton

Sir, While Italy has given the world much in the way of culture, former ambassador Raimondo Manzini (letter, December 8) should be aware that pizza has also been a stalwart ambassador for his country. I can think of no other meal which is so highly regarded by both children and adults.

The logo for the UK's EU presidency was designed by an Italian child and a British child working together to create something instantly recognisable as a symbol for Italy. I really think someone should go out and buy them a pizza as a prize.

Yours faithfully,
LIZ EXTON,
88 Malvern Rd, Bristol BS5 8JB.
lizex@cableinet.co.uk
December 8.

From Mr C. J. Reddall

Sir, I am sure Signor Manzini is too much of a diplomat to imply that Foreign Office mandarins are not in touch with their own young people. If the choice of the logo for Italy had *been offered to my children, it would* undoubtedly have been an image of Gianfranco Zola.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. REDDALL,
Keepers, Wisborough Green,
Sussex RH14 0HE.
December 8.

'Draconian' plan to tax car parking

From Mr Mark McArthur-Christie

Sir, Today's headline, "Labour may tax car parking at work to reduce car use", will, I am sure, add to drivers' feelings of persecution.

We are repeatedly told that we *should* hang up our car keys and use public transport. The integrated transport policy (ITP) seems intent on forcing voters to use bus and train *services, whether they have been* improved or not, through restrictive pricing on car use. Many people (particularly in rural areas) will be penalised for travelling by the only method available to them.

The Association of British Drivers advocates more funding for public transport, but even a highly efficient system will be unable to meet people's flexible travel requirements in the same way as the private car. Public transport is ideal for moving large *numbers of people who wish to travel* at the same times to the same places. Modern working, living and leisure patterns do not lend themselves to such mass transport systems.

The ITP in its current form will serve only to restrict the mobility of thousands of people — whilst offering them no viable alternative. It is vital that government realises that the car is essential for modern travel, not merely a target for revenue generation.

Yours faithfully,
MARK McARTHUR-CHRISTIE
(Campaign Manager),
Association of British Drivers,
160 Farmer's Close, Witney OX8 6NS.
manda@christie.i-way.co.uk
December 2.

From the Chief Executive of the East Mercia Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Sir, Ministers, it appears, are about to levy another tax on the business community.

Whilst the economy may appear to be doing well, many small businesses in this part of the West Midlands continue to struggle. They are faced with customers demanding year-on-year price reductions and the strong pound is seriously harming export potential.

In many parts of the country the car is the only way for employees to get to work. There is no public transport alternative. In addition, employers *need to provide car parking as there is* little public car parking and car crime is endemic.

The result of this policy could be devastating, with companies moving out of the inner city to the edges of the metropolitan areas in order to retain their skilled employees.

The Government should be talking to business before embarking on such a draconian path.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID S. FROST,
Chief Executive,
East Mercia Chamber of
Commerce and Industry,
Chamber of Commerce House,
Ward Street, Walsall WS1 2AG.
December 3.

From Mr D. Bayliss

Sir, Taxing workplace parking is the sort of compromise which might look like a step in the right direction but would be unlikely to have much effect on urban traffic congestion.

If the use of congested roads is to be controlled then this should be charged for directly. Parking charges can be a reasonable second best, but only if carefully designed.

This scheme is not a direct charge *but a tax to be paid by employers.* As such it will of course attract support from those concerned with local government finance and from environmental interests, just as increases in fuel duties have. However, it is not likely to reduce the considerable economic and environmental costs of traffic congestion in our towns and cities because it does not deal with through traffic, or with public car parks or on-street parking, and because it does not impact directly on *the user.*

A more effective short-term arrangement would be a "count and pay" scheme whereby all peak-hour car park use (and possibly off-peak too, in the busiest areas) would be charged to the proprietors of car parks or the tenants of office blocks with parking space. The proceeds would then be used for local transport and environmental improvements, and for abating local business rates.

Yours sincerely,
D. BAYLISS
(Chairman of the Transport Board),
The Institution of Civil Engineers,
1 Great George Street, SW1P 3AA.
December 3.

Sense of direction

From Mrs Janet Whitby

Sir, Your Science Briefing (December 8) concludes that "men learn to pay attention to direction more than women but women are just as good at it, given the motivation."

After many years in the passenger seat being told to "stop reading that *map, women have no sense of direction*", my own conclusion is that maintaining motivation is often more frustrating than being lost.

Yours wearily,
JANET WHITBY,
5 Broughton Gardens, N6 5RS.

New house building

From Mr Brendan J. Ward

Sir, Professor Patricia McLean (letter, December 8) may be encouraged to know that in the United States, in recognition of the activities of nimbies, at *least one major landfill operator* claims to have adopted the banana principle — build absolutely nothing anywhere near anybody.

Yours faithfully,
BRENDAN J. WARD,
120 Ochiltree, Dunblane FK15 0PB.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Sprout strain

From Dr Edward M. A. Willhoft

Sir, You report ("Only one million sprouts to go until Christmas", December 9) that Tesco's "reigning speed champion" at peeling sprouts for the Christmas season processes one sprout every five seconds. A reasonable assumption would be that the *number of discrete manipulations of* the wrist involved in cutting through the stem and removing outer leaves is six: in an 8-hour shift, that amounts to more than 30,000 wrist movements involving tendons in the hands, through the carpal tunnel of the wrist and arm.

The company should guard against allowing such sustained work rates, encouraged by employing operatives on piece-work. The conditions, as described in your report, could produce *wrist/arm disorders (sometimes referred* to as RSI) unless controlled pacing is introduced and early signs of strains are closely monitored.

Encouraging high outputs, especially in a cold environment, is a well-established formula for producing upper-limb disorders, leading to loss of earning capabilities which employers choose to ignore at their and their employees' peril.

Yours faithfully,
EDWARD M. A. WILLHOFT
(Ergonomic consultant),
41 Higher Green, Epsom KT17 3BB.
ewillhoft@aol.com

Spare Britannia this ignominy

From Lord Callaghan of Cardiff

Sir, The best course for *Britannia* is to be broken up (report, December 10; letters, December 2). Princess Anne is right. *Britannia* is a costly ship to maintain and after she has left the Navy's care, any future owners will find they cannot live up to her present immaculate state. They may make a quick profit, but sentiment will fade *and I forecast that before the 21st century* is very old, she will become an embarrassment and a liability. Her owners will then seek to hand her over to some handful of enthusiasts who will struggle to raise funds to prevent her from mouldering away in some obscure harbour. We should learn from the fate of some other historic *ships.*

I write because I have a particular concern as the only surviving member of the Board of Admiralty of 1951 which took the decision to build her, and also as one whose father served as a rigger in her predecessor, the *Victoria and Albert,* from 1904 to 1914.

End *Britannia*'s life now and let us *remember her as she is.*

Faithfully,
JAMES CALLAGHAN,
House of Lords.
December 10.

Curators' work

From Mr Charles Pettitt

Sir, Richard Morrison's column ("The charge of the cobwebbed brigade", November 26) was persuasively written. What a shame, therefore, that his premise seems to be that the prime purpose of museums is to entertain — to be theme parks like Alton Towers, or to present spectacles like Arsenal Football Club or Lord's Cricket Ground. The prime purpose of a true museum is to protect and preserve its *collections, which in the UK represent* a large portion of the cultural and scientific history, not only of this nation but of a large area of the world.

The second function of a true museum is to research and interpret the collections. To accuse the present generation of curators of being "cobwebbed" is far from the truth: as a body they show remarkable ingenuity in applying the latest advances of science to their studies, and in providing intelligible interpretations for the public.

Museums in this country have been underfunded for a long time. The short-term and ultimately self-defeating view on charging visitors has, I believe, been taken by a layer of "bean-counting" administrators which has, for the most part recently, been imposed on the dedicated curators.

To a large extent the assembly of, and research on, these collections has already been paid for by British taxpayers. To say that they, or their descendants, should now have to pay to view the results of all the research and interpretation done on their behalf by generations of curators appears to be much more of "a sleight-of-hand illogicality" than anything Mr Morrison attempted to portray.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES PETTITT,
Glencourt,
Park Avenue, Bramhall SK7 1BN.
c.pettitt@man.ac.uk

Free speech in prisons

From Mr David Squire

Sir, Is it not nonsense for Mr Stephen Shaw, Director of the Prison Reform Trust, to appeal for "free speech" for prisoners (letter, December 8)?

Once criminals have been sentenced and lose their liberty they should lose contact with the outside world other than with their families. Why should we have to put up with them twice? They chose to commit a crime. We did not agree to become victims.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SQUIRE,
16 Netley Road, Brentford TW8 0SF.

Christmas aisles

From Eur Ing Stuart Dryden

Sir, I was heartened to read today of the proposed "service" to be broadcast by the Archbishop of Canterbury to shoppers in Asda stores on the Sunday before Christmas.

I was dismayed to learn, however, that what was described as a "mere" *1.1 million people attend Anglican* services on a Sunday. On that basis, buying my favourite newspaper doesn't even qualify as a minority interest.

Yours etc,
STUART DRYDEN,
Hawthorns,
Ham Lane, Aston OX18 2DE.
December 8.

Castles in the air

From Dr John S. Swales

Sir, In centuries past, rich eccentrics built follies, usually in inaccessible *places on country estates, far from the* public gaze. How fortunate we are in this televisual age to have a flamboyant, rich eccentric release his folly into the stratosphere for *more people to* see in a day than see your average folly in a millennium.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN S. SWALES,
The Haven, Church Path,
Great Mongeham, Deal CT14 0HH.
December 10.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 10: His Excellency Mr Mendi Msimang was received in farewell audience by The Queen and took leave upon relinquishing his appointment as High Commissioner for the Republic of South Africa in London.

The Earl of Airlie KT (Lord Chamberlain) had an audience of The Queen this morning and presented an Address from the House of Lords to which Her Majesty was graciously pleased to make reply.

His Excellency Dr L.M. Singhvi and Shrimati Singhvi were received in farewell audience by The Queen and took leave upon His Excellency relinquishing his appointment as High Commissioner for the Republic of India in London.

Mr Justice Park was received by The Queen upon his appointment as a Justice of the High Court when Her Majesty conferred upon him the honour of Knighthood and invested him with the Insignia of a Knight Bachelor.

Sir Norman Foster was received by The Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the Insignia of a Member of the Order of Merit.

Sir Denis Rooke was received by The Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the Insignia of a Member of the Order of Merit.

Sir Edward Ford (Secretary and Registrar of the Order of Merit) was in attendance.

The Lord Hoyle (Lord in Waiting) was present at Heathrow Airport, London, this afternoon upon the Departure of The President of the Republic of Fiji and First Lady, Adi Lady Lala Mara and bade farewell to His Excellency and Lady Mara on behalf of The Queen.

December 10: The Prince Edward, Trustee, this evening attended The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Christmas Party at the Hotel Inter-Continental, Hyde Park Corner, London W1.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 10: The Princess Royal, Commandant-in-Chief, Women's Transport Service (F.A.N.Y.), today received Mrs Anna Whitehead upon relinquishing her appointment as Corps Commander and Mrs Lynda Rose upon assuming the appointment.

Her Royal Highness, Patron, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, this afternoon attended a meeting of the International Task Force on Children affected by war and absolute poverty at the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Hallam Street, London W1.

The Princess Royal, Patron, the Association of Combined Youth Clubs, this evening visited the Fitzrovia Youth in Action Group, the Warren, Whitefield Street, London W1; the Marylebone Youth Project, Cosway Street, London NW1; and the Mobeley Sports and Education Centre, Kilburn Lane, London, W10.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 10: The Prince of Wales, President, The Prince's Trust, this morning held a report back meeting for members of the House of Commons and the European Parliament at St James's Palace.

His Royal Highness, Patron, Ton Class Association, this afternoon held a Reception at St James's Palace.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 10: The Duke of Kent, Patron, the London Philharmonic, this evening attended a concert at the Royal Festival Hall, London SE1.

Today's royal engagements

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will attend the decommissioning of *HMY Britannia* in Portsmouth, at 11.00. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and Princess Alexandra will also attend.

The Prince of Wales will attend the Royal Yachtsmen Association dinner at HM Naval Base, Portsmouth at 7.30.

The Princess Royal, President, Missions to Seamen, will attend a carol concert at Guildhall, at 7.30.

Air Commandant Dame Jean Conan Doyle

A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Air Commandant Dame Jean Conan Doyle, DBE, OBE, AE, will be held in St Clement Danes, Strand, London, on Thursday, January 29, 1998, at noon. Those intending to be present are asked to notify the Ministry of Defence, Pld(Ceremonial)(RAF) on 0171 218 2524/or 2628.

Sir Gilbert Longden

A Thanksgiving Service for the life of Sir Gilbert James Morley Longden, MBE, will be held at Holy Trinity Church, Brompton Road, on Thursday, December 11, at noon.

Eton College

Eton College closed on Wednesday.

Mr J.R. Brooks is retiring. In the final of the House Association the Rev C.M. Jones' defeated College by two goals to one.

School opens for the Lent Half on Wednesday, January 7.

Warminster School

The Governors of Warminster School have pleasure in announcing the appointment of Mr David Dowdles, currently a Deputy Head at Bradfield College, as Headmaster from September 1, 1998, in succession to Mr Michael Pipes.

The King's School, Canterbury

The ninth Calvin & Rose G. Hoffman Prize for Distinguished Publication on Christopher Marlowe has been awarded to Mrs J.M. Farringdon of Swansea. Entries for the tenth prize should be submitted to the Headmaster by September 1, 1998. Further details may be obtained from the Headmaster's Secretary, The King's School, Canterbury CT1 2ES.

Duchy of Lancaster

Lord Shuttleworth has been appointed to the Council of the Duchy of Lancaster from January 1, 1998.

Parliamentary Carol Service

The Prime Minister read the sixth lesson at a parliamentary carol service held yesterday in St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey, in aid of the Westminster Medical School Research Trust. The Speaker read the seventh lesson.

Canon Donald Gray, Chaplain to the Speaker, officiated. The Rev Steve Penrose, Free Church Chaplain of Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, read the Christmas bidding prayer.

The Rev Philip Allen and the Rev Richard Cloete, Roman Catholic and Anglican members of the chaplaincy team at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, and Ms Sarah Mullally, Director of Nursing and Quality, led the prayers.

Lady Barber, Chairman of the Palace of Westminster All-Party Ladies' Committee, read the first lesson, Professor Christopher Wastell, Emeritus Professor of Surgery, Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, read the second lesson. Dr Ron Zeegan, Director of Clinical Studies, read the third lesson. Ms Margaret Ewing, Scottish National Party, read the fourth and Mr William Hague, Leader of HM Opposition, read the fifth lesson.

The Rev Peter Cowell and the Rev Dr Paul Bradshaw, priest vicars, were robed and in the Sanctuary.

PAUL ROGERS

Ian Meadows, of Northamptonshire Archaeology, with the rare Saxon helmet his team discovered at Wollaston in the Nene Valley. After months of conservation work the helmet goes on show at a Leicester museum from December 22

Birthdays today

Brigadier R.W. Acworth, registrar, St Paul's Cathedral, 59; Admiral of the Fleet Sir Edward Ashmore, 78; Miss Anna Carteret, actress, 55; Lord Elliott of Morpeth, 77; Sir Robert Fellowes, Private Secretary to the Queen, 56; Mr Andrew Lansley, former director, Conservative Research Department, 41; Mr Cliff Michelmore, broadcaster and television producer, 78; Sir Wilfrid Newton, former chairman, London Regional Transport, 69; Ms Karin Pappenheim, former director, National Council for One Parent Families, 43; Mr D.E. Plowright, former chairman, Granada Television, 67; Mr Carlo Ponti, film producer, 84; Mr Patrick Reyntiens, glass painter, 72; Mr Alexander Solzhenitsyn, author, 79; Miss S.A. Spencer, former general secretary, National Council for Civil Liberties, 45; Mrs Sheila Walker, former chief commissioner, Girl Guides Association, 80.

Institution of Mechanical Engineers

At an Ordinary Meeting held at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers last night, Mr Sydney Gillibrand, CBE, FEng, received the James Watt International Medal and Mr Stewart Miller, CBE, FRS, FRSE, FEng, received the James Clayton Prize for engineering achievements. At the same meeting Professor Sir Bernard Crossland, CBE, MRIA, FRS, FEng, was inducted as an Honorary Fellow. Dr Shigetomo Matsui, Managing Director of Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd, delivered the 85th Thomas Hawksley Memorial Lecture entitled "Harmonisation between Man and Robot".

Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners

The Society of Trust and Estate Practititoners held its sixth Annual General Meeting and its Branch Chairmen's National Conference at Glaziers' Hall, London, on December 6, 1997. Mrs Justice Arden, DBE, Chairman of the Law Commission, delivered the luncheon address. Chairmen and representatives from thirty-one Branches were present. Mr Geoffrey Shindler, the Chairman of the Society, presided.

Institute of Biology

The following have been elected as Fellows and may use the designatory letters CBiol FIBiol:

Professor G L Collingridge, Rev Dr G M W Cook, Dr J A Davies, Professor T M Dexter, Dr K Harrison, Professor R F Irvine, Professor I A Johnston, Dr L A Robertson, Professor K P V Titanji, Professor P Workman.

Call 0171 581 8333 for information in membership.

Middle Temple

Mr Justice Pumfrey has been elected a Master of the Bench.

New evidence gives Man a far earlier start in America

By NORMAN HAMMOND, ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

MAN may have been in the New World three times longer than we thought. Reassessment of the controversial Monte Verde site in South America, together with new evidence of the diversity of human DNA in the Americas, suggest arrival perhaps 30,000, rather than 12,000 years ago.

Although a route through Siberia and Alaska across the Bering Strait, dry during the last Ice Age, has long been accepted as the entrance to America, the date has been a matter of vigorous debate. The oldest widespread culture, that of the Clovis big-game hunters some 11,500 years ago, has become a touchstone: American archaeologists divide on the question of "pre-Clovis" occupation more vociferously than they espouse Democratic or Republican politics.

Several of the conservative sceptics, led by the widely-respected C. Vance Haynes and Dena Dincauze, have now announced their agreement with the radicals, led by Tom Dillehay and James Adovasio, that the site of Monte Verde in southern Chile is clearly old. While the consensual date is only 12,500 years ago, the location of the site some 10,000 miles from Alaska implies "a fundamentally different history of human colonisation of the New World", the group agree in the leading journal *American Antiquity* after visiting the site.

Professor Dincauze conceded that "we couldn't get this strange congeries of stuff by any means other than human action". The evidence includes wooden hut foundations with carefully tied bindings of split reeds, the presence of food remains, and the chemical signature for fat-rich deposits where meat was butchered.

The stone tools were also convincing. "Some of the most exquisite pressure flaking I've ever seen on grainy volcanic stone," Professor Dincauze told an audience at Harvard University. "A new scenario to explain the first peopling of America is now needed".

Evidence to support this has just emerged from a conference on human evolution at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on Long Island, where more than 130 papers detailed recent work on palaeogenetics, including DNA research, and correlations with archaeological and anthropological evidence.

While the thrust of the conference was towards the origin of modern humans — for which an origin in Africa or the Middle East not much more than 100,000 years ago seems increasingly likely — the origins of Native Americans were also considered. Genetic diversity in both male chromosomes and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), which is inherited only through the female line, suggests that at least 20,000 to 30,000 years were needed to provide the variability observed.

In the Ticuna Indians of the Amazon basin in Brazil, a novel variant within mtDNA has evolved within that timespan, according to Dr H. Erlich and his colleagues. The same tribe feature in the work of Dr Andres Ruiz Linares, of Colombia, who has detected ancient population movements across the Andes between the Amazon basin and the Pacific coast of Ecuador.

An early diversity of Amerindian mtDNA is also supported by research on 152 prehistoric Oneota skeletons from the eastern USA. Drs Anne Stone and Mark Stoneking told the conference that the sample was similar to living northern Amerindian groups, suggesting "that these lineages have expanded and accumulated changes in the last 23,000 to 37,000 years".

Whether this influx of people into the unpopulated Americas took place in one wave or several is still disputed: Dr Ruiz Linares feels that the male Y chromosome evidence suggests diverse origins, while the female mtDNA indicates a single wave with much internal diversity, according to Drs Stone and Stoneking.

Linguistic analysis supports their view, in that all Amerindian languages south of the Canadian border seem to belong to one major group; two later migrations, the second that of the living Inuit or Eskimo peoples, provided the remaining languages.

The recent evidence, archaeological and genetic, thus seems to indicate a date for human entry into the New World somewhere between the conservative and radical positions: neither the 12,000 nor the 40,000 year option is now credible, but immigration just before the coldest peak of the last Ice Age, perhaps 30,000 years ago, is increasingly likely.

Dinners

HM Government
Mr George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, was the host at a dinner given by Her Majesty's Government last night at Admiralty House in honour of the Defence Minister of the Ukraine.

Charterhouse
The Master, Professor James Malpas, presided at a dinner to celebrate the 371st anniversary of the foundation of Sutton's Hospital in Charterhouse. The toast "The Governors and Governing Body of the School" was proposed by Sir James Stubbs. The Rev John Witheridge, who was principal guest, gave the address at the annual service.

Byron Society
Mr John Mortimer, QC, was the speaker at a dinner of the Byron Society held last night at the Athenaeum Club.

Law Society
Mr Phillip Sycamore, President of the Law Society, the vice-president and the council held a dinner last night at the Society's Hall. Among those present were:

The Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, the Vice Chancellor of the Supreme Court, the President of the Family Division, the Solicitor General, Mr Geoffrey Hoon, MP, and Mr Ross Cranston, MP.

Marylebone Cricket Club
Mr Phillip Hodson was in the Chair at a dinner of the Marylebone Cricket Club held in the Pavilion at Lord's last night. Mr John Carr proposed the toast to "Cricket", and Mr Hodson responded.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Charles Wesley, musician, Bristol, 1757; Hector Berlioz, composer, Côte-Saint-André, 1803; John Adams-Acton, sculptor, Acton, Middlesex, 1836; Robert Koch, bacteriologist, Nobel laureate 1905, Klausthal, Germany, 1843.

DEATHS: Llewelyn Ab Gruffydd, Prince of Wales, killed in battle near Builth, 1282; John Strype, historian, London, 1737; Colley Cibber, actor-manager, dramatist, London, 1757; Richard Doyle, artist and caricaturist, London, 1833; Olive Schreiner, novelist, Cape Town, 1920; Sam Cooke, singer, Los Angeles, 1964.

King James II fled from England, 1688.

Venetian blinds were patented in London by Edward Beran, 1769.

King Edward VIII abdicated, 1936.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr P.A. Bowman and Miss N.C. Busby
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs Leo Bowman, of Melbourne, Australia, and Nicola, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Roger Busby, of Braine L'Alleud, Belgium.

Mr I.L. Burrage and Miss L.C. Piper
The engagement is announced between Jonathan, only son of Mr and Mrs Leslie Burrage, of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, and Lucy, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Piper, of Hawkhurst, Kent.

Mr A.G. Drake-Brockman and Miss G. Lodge
The engagement is announced between Anthony, son of Mr and Mrs Gervase Drake-Brockman, of Hundon, Suffolk, and Gillian, daughter of Mr T.J. Lodge and Ms A.M. Carr, of Manchester.

Mr P.J. Griffiths and Miss A.V. Gray
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs Evan Griffiths, of Goldcliff, Gwent, and Alison, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Simon Gray, of Wigginton, Oxfordshire.

Mr A.J. Langeler and Miss J.R. Smellie
The engagement is announced between Anthonie, son of Mr and Mrs Antonius Langeler, of Wachtendonk, Germany, and Joanna, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ian Smellie, of Orston, Nottingham.

Dr M.S. McKendry and Dr S.A. Penn
The engagement is announced between Marty, younger son of Mr and Mrs Jack McKendry, of Methven, New Zealand, and Sophie, second daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Penn, of Worplesdon, Surrey.

Mr B.C.P. Hammond and Miss I.A. Mimpriss
The engagement is announced between Benjamin, youngest son of the Rev and Mrs M.J. Hammond, of Norwich, Norfolk, and Isobel, elder daughter of Mr Peter Mimpriss, of Wissington, Suffolk, and Mrs Hilary Mimpriss, of London.

Mr J.G.A. Shillington and Miss E.M. Wordsworth
The engagement is announced between Jonathan, elder son of Mr and Mrs Anthony Shillington, of Glebe House, Shalstone, Buckinghamshire, and Mary, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Antony Wordsworth, of Little Brockholds Farm, Radwinter, Essex.

Mr I.St.P. Slatter and Miss C.A. Edmonds
The engagement is announced between Ian, eldest son of Mr Stuart St.P. Slatter, of Maida Vale, London, and Ms Gail Mallatratt, of Primrose Hill, London, and Claudine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Kenneth Edmonds, of Bengeo, Hertford.

Major C.P. Smedley, RAR, and Miss F.L. Kewley
The engagement is announced between Craig, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Barrie Smedley, of Pinjarra, Western Australia, and Fiona, eldest daughter of Mrs Gail Kewley, of Grasby, Lincolnshire.

Marriage

Mr C.F.C. Meyrick and Miss A.J. Huntley
The marriage took place on Saturday, December 6, at St Margarets, Fernhurst, of Charles Meyrick, son of the late Lieutenant-Commander Robin Meyrick, RN, and of Mrs John Newton-Sharp, of Ash, Somerset, and Amanda Huntley, daughter of Mr and Mrs Andrew Huntley, of Fernhurst, Sussex.

Royal Air Force College Cranwell

Dr John Reid, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, was the reviewing officer at the graduation of 68 officers of no 168 Initial Officer Training Course from the Royal Air Force College Cranwell.

Graduating Officers of No 168 Initial Officer Training Course

General Duties Branch – Pilot
Flying Officers A J Cade, A M Kay BSc, S D Kimberley.
Pilot Officer J Woodward BEng.
Acting Pilot Officers C J Howe, K S Meakin, N E Owczarkowski, G S Reader, I D Thorne.

General Duties – Navigator
Flying Officer D M Williams BEng.
Pilot Officers N P Bury BSc, D M A Fielding BA, D J Thomas BSc.

Operations Support Branch – Air Traffic Control
Flying Officers S A Boon, S M Cannon, M J Fountain, J J Hoult, A D Huyton, A G King, C G Neeson MA.
Acting Pilot Officer B Hall.

Operations Support Branch - Fighter Control
Flying Officers H M Black BA, M D Craig BSc.
Acting Pilot Officer D L Clayton.

Operations Support Branch - Flight Operations
Flying Officers G Harrop, C Waddilove.

Operations Support Branch - Intelligence
Pilot Officers A M Bennett LLB, A D Hetterley BA.

Operations Support Branch - Regiment
Flying Officers R M Dodd, W J McGhee.
Pilot Officers S P Neenan BEd, J D Stewart BA.
Acting Pilot Officer K G Danso.

Engineering Branch
Flying Officers G J Bryant BEng, B N Cox, R J Ditton IEng, S W Hill, D R Jackson, T T A Lambert, P D Martin-Jones BEng, M H McGeorge, J D K Ratcliffe, S M Trollone.
Pilot Officers S C Rowdon BEng, S A Weekes BSc.

Supply Branch
Flying Officers G S Burcher, A D Jones.

Administrative Branch - Secretarial
Flying Officers S T Birchall, S M Full, M L Parker MA, M A Selway BSc, G E Solomon.
Pilot Officers S A Bird, S Floyd BA, M I Jones BA, N A King BSc.
Acting Pilot Officer K P Bryan.

Administrative Branch - Training
Flying Officers S J Bowles BSc Econ, K H Charlesworth BSc, I A Johnstone.
Pilot Officer J P Goodwin BEng PGCE.

Administrative Branch - Physical Education
Flying Officer P D Renton.

Medical Branch
Flight Lieutenant A K Durrani MB BS FRCS.

Medical Secretarial Branch
Flying Officer N J Carlin.

Foreign and Commonwealth Students

Qatar Emiri Air Force
2Lt M H Al-Qahtani; 2Lt S M Fetais.

Seychelles People's Defence Forces (Air Wing)
2Lt J J M E Vital.

Prizewinners of No 168 Initial Officer Training Course

The Sword of Merit, awarded to the RAF cadet who, during Initial Officer Training, has demonstrated outstanding ability, leadership and other officer qualities and potential for further development: Student Officer M L Parker MA.

The Hennessy Trophy and Philip Sassoon Memorial Prize, awarded to the RAF cadet who, during Initial Officer Training, has proved to be the best all-round cadet, other than the Sword of Merit winner: Officer Cadet S M Trollone.

The British Aircraft Corporation Trophy, awarded to the RAF or Foreign and Commonwealth cadet who has attained the highest marks for professional studies on the course: Officer Cadet B Hall.

Overseas Students' Prize, awarded to the Foreign and Commonwealth cadet who has produced the best overall performance in leadership, officer qualities and professional studies on the course: Officer Cadet J J M E Vital.

The Group Captain Williams Memorial Trophy, awarded to the RAF cadet who, during Initial Officer Training, has shown the greatest improvement: Officer Cadet M H McGeorge.

The Sarah Moland Memorial Prize, awarded to the RAF cadet who, during Initial Officer Training, has demonstrated outstanding qualities of courage and fortitude: Student Officer S Floyd BA.

The Longcroft Trophy, awarded to the cadet who has contributed most to sport during Initial Officer Training: Officer Cadet W J McGhee.

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

Jesus then said to his disciples: 'Anyone who wishes to be a follower of mine must renounce self, he must take up his cross and follow me. Matthew 16 : 24

BIRTHS

CALDERON - On December 4th 1997, to Rosanna (née Chittenden) and Manolo, a daughter (Olivia Rocio Honor).

FAZMY S.A. - On December 4th at The Portland Hospital, to Nariah and Faudzy, a son, a brother to Farouq and Fareez.

HAMILTON - To John and Nathalie (née de Lannoy), a daughter, Antonia, born in Belgium 23rd November.

HILLS - On December 1st in Amsterdam, to Max and Nick, a son, Frank Wiardus Lafone.

HOPKINS - On December 8th, to Susan (née Murphy) and Michael, two sons, Zachary Michael and Lawrence James.

HUE-WILLIAMS - On 9th December, to Ali (née Joy) and Michael, a daughter, Lucca Leonora.

LOCKHART-SMITH - On 6th December in Norfolk, to Margaret (née Gay) and Dickie, a daughter, Sophie Graham.

MACVICAR - On December 8th, at Pembury Hospital, Kent, to Pat (née Webber) and Robert, a son, Angus Robert, 8lbs 11ozs, a brother for Christine and Helen.

BIRTHS

NORRIS - On December 7th, to Arlene (née Rattray) and Charles, a daughter, Philippa Lucy, a sister for Oliver and Annabel.

O'CONNELL-HUSSEY - On December 7th at The Portland Hospital, to Róisín and Marc, a daughter, Enya Róisín, a sister for Fionn. Deo Gratias.

SHELLEY - On December 6th at The Portland Hospital, to Gary and Stephanie, a son, William, a brother for Edward.

SKINNER - See Wellings.

SMITH - On December 9th, to Ann (née Pugh) and David, a beautiful son, Edward John Frank.

WEBSTER - On 3rd December 1997, to Lottie (née Reynolds) and Geoff, a son, Jack Anthony Egerton.

WELLINGS - On December 2nd in Hong Kong, to Sasha (née Skinner) and Mike, a son, Cosmo Banks.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

SMALLEY - Donovan (Solicitor) died 11th December 1996. Remembered with deepest love by Edna his wife, son David and grandchildren.

DEATHS

BOYCOTT - Joan on 6th December peacefully at Shipton-under-Wychwood. Widow of W.S (Bill) Boycott of Ewen. Cremation Private. Thanksgiving Service noon Wednesday 17th December at St Mary's Church, Shipton-under-Wychwood. Donations to a charity of your choice. Further enquiries c/o Cowley & Son Ltd., Funeral Directors. Tel: (01285) 653298.

BURDETT-PROCTOR - With great sadness Helen, Sabi, Karen and Selene announce the sudden death of Richard Burdett-Proctor in an unfortunate accident in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, on Thursday 20th November 1997. The funeral service will be held at St Michael's Church, Blackheath Park, London on Thursday 11th December 1997 at 3 o'clock. Richard's ashes will be scattered at sea from his yacht SAKASE.

CARTER - Sir Derrick Hunton on December 8th peacefully at home aged 91, beloved husband of the late Madeline, brother of Tony and Helen and dear father to Tim, Penny and Sasha. Funeral at Withington Church Monday 15th December 2 pm. Family flowers. Enquiries to Norman, Trotman & Hughes on (01451) 860288.

GILDEA - Christian, aged 28 years, in a tragic road accident on December 6th returning from work at The Conquest Hospital. Most deeply loved and treasured only son of Pat and Tony, dearly loved brother of Gabrielle (S. Africa), Ruth, Naomi (Canada) and Becky. A dearly loved grandson, nephew, uncle and brother-in-law. Requiem Mass at Battle Catholic Church, Mount Street, Battle on Tuesday 16th December at 10 am. Family flowers only, please, donations in memory of Christian to "British Medical Education Trust" c/o F. Jempson & Son, 38 High Street, Battle, tel: 01424 772029. "Blessed are those who mourn - for they shall be comforted".

GREAVES - (Née Salaman) Betty died peacefully on December 4th 1997. Funeral Service at St Philip's Church, Alderley Edge, on Friday December 12th 1997 at 12.15 pm. Family flowers only, donations if desired to R.N.L.I. All donations and enquiries to Albert R. Slack F/D (01625) 525063.

HAMILTON - Elizabeth, Authoress and Latin Teacher, on December 8th. Funeral Service at Carmelites, 41 Kensington Church Street, London at 11am Wednesday 17th December 1997.

HARRISON - Pam (née Sandbach), late of Dower House, North End, widow of Hugh, on 10th December, peacefully. Funeral at St Martin's Church, East Woodhay, Newbury, 2.30 pm Tuesday 16th December. Contact (01635) 578510.

HUNT - Sir Peter J. BSc FRICS on Monday, December 8th, 1997 at the Harley Street Clinic, aged 64 years. Dearly beloved husband of Anne, loving father of Russell and remembered by his many friends. Private funeral for family on Monday, December 15th. Floral tributes to C.H. Lovegrove, 58 Briants Avenue, Caversham between 8.30 am and 9.30 am on Monday, December 15th. Alternatively, contributions to Barnardos should be sent to Kenyons, 83 Westbourne Grove, London W2 4UL (cheques to be made payable to Barnardos). A Memorial Service has been arranged for 3 pm, Tuesday, January 27th, 1998 at St Martin's In The Fields, London.

JOHNSON - Dr John Alfred CB aged 69, dearly loved by all his family, friend of all who knew him. Private family funeral. Donations in lieu of flowers to Sue Ryder Home Cheltenham. Memorial Service to be announced.

LANCASHIRE - David on 10th December peacefully at home. Much loved husband, father and grandfather, we give thanks for him. Funeral Service at St Joseph's Wells on Thursday December 18th at 11.30 am. Family flowers only, but donations if desired, to Children of Chernobyl Fund Wells.

McMURTRIE - On December 8th suddenly in hospital in London after much suffering borne with tremendous courage and determination Robert Peter Lax aged 71. Most dear husband of Jane and father of Penelope, Anne and Fiona and grandfather of Richard, Emma, George, Edward, Harry and George. Funeral Service for the family only at St Ippolyts Church on Tuesday 16th December at 11.30 am.

RISBRIDGER - Pamela Ann Grattan (née Geary) died in hospital on Friday December 5th 1997. The funeral will be held at Lambeth Crematorium, Blackshaw Road, Tooting, at 12. Donations in lieu of flowers to the Royal Marsden Hospital, Chelsea.

RODD - Margaret Florine (Peggy), widow of Cecil, mother of Tricia, Michael, Sally and Jeremy, grandmother and great-grandmother, peacefully on December 6th after a short illness. Much loved and greatly missed by all. Cremation at Woking Crematorium on Tuesday December 16th at 2 pm. Family flowers only: donations if desired to the Ockenden Venture. All enquiries to Cyril H. Lovegrove, 9 Cresswell Corner, Anchor Hill, Knaphill, Surrey GU21 2JD, tel: (01483) 799191.

TRAVERS - Suddenly on December 9th at Felpham, Sussex, Frank L.D.S. R.C.S. (Eng). Dearly loved husband of Ann and devoted father and grandfather. Requiem Mass at the Sacred Heart Church, Wimbledon at 11 am on Tuesday 16th December. No flowers please, any donations to the Special Care Baby Unit at St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey. Enquiries and donations to Mears & Cotterill, 169 Merton Road, Wandsworth SW18 5EF. Tel: (0181) 874-7698.

VOGEL - On 7th December 1997 at Ellesborough Manor, Butlers Cross, Aylesbury, Bucks, Charles Edward Vogel priest. Funeral Service at Kingston Lisle Church (nr. Wantage, Oxfordshire) at 3 pm on Wednesday 17th December 1997. Family flowers only but, if so wished, donations may be sent to Christian Aid, P.O. Box 100, London SW1 7RT (Registered Charity No. 258003).

WEBSTER - Barbara Joan (née Cheese) died peacefully on Friday December 5th after a long battle courageously fought, beloved daughter of Joan and mother of Katherine. Funeral to be held at St Nicholas Church, Manor Park Road, Chislehurst on Tuesday December 16th. Friends and family. Flowers or donations to the British Diabetic Association and all enquiries to Francis Chappell & Sons, 332 Crofton Road, Farnborough, Kent BR6 8NW, tel: (01689) 853277.

WILLIAMS - Wilfred Arthur peacefully after a short illness on 9th December 1997 aged 72. Funeral Service at Poole Crematorium on Monday, 15th December at 12.30 pm and afterwards at The Kings Head Hotel, The Square, Wimborne, Dorset. Donations to The Stroke Association or floral tributes to F.C. Douch & Son, 3 The Square, Wimborne, Dorset.

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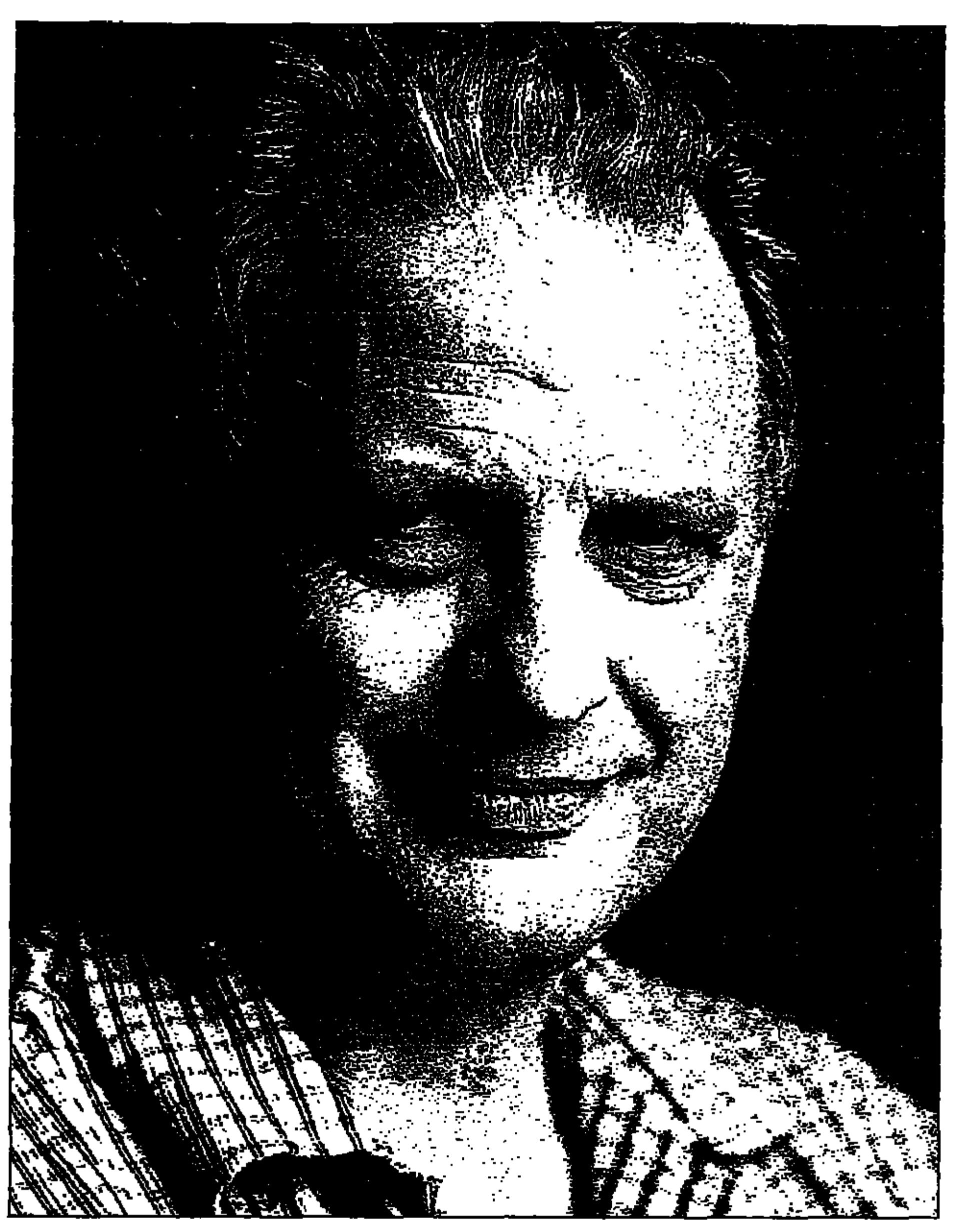
KENNETH McLEISH



Kenneth McLeish, translator and author, died after a stroke on November 28 aged 57. He was born in Glasgow on October 10, 1940.

The son of a professor of educational psychology whose intellectual interests had a wide range, Kenneth McLeish had a similar polyvalence, which extended to the world of the Classics, music, theatre and the arts. He was a versatile linguist, seemingly able to acquire fresh tongues by osmosis. In his writing he was scholarly, yet a populariser, bringing the fruits of his work to a wide audience through his translations from Classical drama. A number of erudite guides and companions to music and the arts performed a complementary function.

Kenneth McLeish was educated at Bradford Grammar School and at Worcester College, Oxford, where he won the senior open scholarship of his year. He began by reading Classics, but after Mods he switched to music. He took his BMus under the tuition of Edmund Rubbra.

He was a capable composer and had several works performed on the Third Programme. However, he later renounced serious composition, while continuing to have a highly informed passion for music. This was shared by his wife, Valerie, with whom he collaborated on a number of books, including *The Oxford First Companion to Music* (1982) and *The Listener's Guide to Classical Music* (1993). He never forgot Rubbra's wry remark about one of his undergraduate efforts: "The notes are all right, but something's wrong with the spaces in between."

Rubbra's words took on a new significance when McLeish began his prolific and innovative career as a translator. In Greek drama in particular, he was shrewdly conscious of the need to leave space between the words in order for a line to sing, and for the unspoken to be heard. He realised, as more acclaimed translators often did not, that an uncrowded text allowed its duplicities to emerge and gave the actors' voices and movement room to make their mark.

After coming down from Oxford, where he might have made an excellent don, he became a schoolmaster, first at Watford Grammar School and then at Bedales, where he was uneasy, although conscientious: he did not entirely approve of fee-paying private schools, nor was his demanding perfectionism universally appreciated by the children of the 1960s. By the mid-1970s he had exhausted his pedagogic zeal. He decided to become a full-time, freelance author. It was a brave, almost desperate move, in which he was unselfishly seconded by his wife, with whom he had two sons.

In a sense, his varied and sometimes heterodox writing, in which *haute vulgarisation* had its regular place, was a continuation of schoolmastering by other means. The casts of his plays sometimes became pupils, who received his lessons with greedy appreciation and for whom he had rare patience and, when merited, admiration.

During his last terms at Bedales, he met Frederic Raphael, whose son he taught and with whom he was to enjoy an enduring and intimate friendship which was mediated almost entirely by the translations from Greek and Latin on which they collaborated. Their friendship began when McLeish agreed, with typical generosity, to supervise a translation of Catullus on which Raphael had already embarked; the two men soon became equal partners in the enterprise.

Michael Ayrton designed the jacket for the published volume. Ayrton had agreed to the artistic directorship of a recreation of Aeschylus's lost *The Cretans*, but died before the project could be realised. It was regretted by the translators that Ayrton had no hand in the sets or costumes for the BBC production of their *Oresteia* in 1978. The trilogy was given an unduly operatic treatment and was harshly treated by critics. Under the title, *The Serpent Son*, it was published by Cambridge University Press and later reissued by Methuen.

As was not infrequently necessary, McLeish abated disappointment with industry. He had already translated much of Aristophanes (the impropriety of comedy was as sweet to him as the solemnities of tragedy) and he now wrote *The Theatre of Aristophanes* (1980). It was both scholarly and carefully reckless. Its references to Frankie Howerd and to Laurel and Hardy (he could recall their routines frame by frame) exasperated academics who lacked both McLeish's sense of fun and his practical knowledge of how to obtain a laugh. The least malicious of men, he was alert to every kind of joke: without prurience and never foul-mouthed, he relished the cloacal and erotic outrageousness of the ancient world.

Had McLeish always been in excellent health, his industry and the quality even of his smallest book would have been extraordinary. But in fact he was hampered by the effects of a stroke which he suffered in Delphi in 1979, while attending a symposium on Greek drama. He happened to be laid low at a lecture by George Steiner. One of the anxious organisers bent over him and asked if he had had too much sun. In great distress, McLeish found the laconic wit to reply "No. Too much Steiner". (He later took particular trouble to give an encouraging review to Deborah Steiner's first book on Pindar.)

Thanks to speedy treatment in Athens, McLeish was quite soon able to resume work. For the next 17 years, he was prodigiously industrious. He translated Jarry, Molière, Ibsen (finding new ironies in what seemed Norwegian stodginess), Labiche (he loved farce) and Strindberg. He compiled three reference books of enduring usefulness: *The Penguin Companion to the Arts in the 20th Century* (1985), containing over eight hundred informative biographies, a *Guide to Human Thought* (1993), in which his editorial finesse is evident throughout, and *Myth* (1996), an encyclopaedic treasury of succinct comparative anthropology.

But McLeish's greatest and probably incomparable achievement lay in his versions of Attic drama. He reinvented Euripides by the apparently easy means of addressing himself without preconceptions to that extraordinarily ambiguous poet and man of the theatre. By abjuring all "scheme" (theories of translation were of small interest to him), McLeish made the text and the subtext his own words and ours. His emphasis was always on performability (he and Raphael insisted that even Catullus should be *playful*). The brevity of his lines seemed still to be dense with implications and brought a refreshing flexibility to the many productions in which they featured.

McLeish saw unacknowledged proximities between Greek tragedy and comedy and argued (in a yet to be published monograph on Aristotle's *Poetics*) against abrupt categorisation. His play, *Orpheus*, to be seen in London now, bridges the distinction with exemplary daring: for example, when Dionysos enters and greets Demeter with "Aunty!".

With publication next year of his and Raphael's *Aias*, McLeish will complete, alas posthumously, a library of all extant ancient Greek drama, with the exception of Menander, whom he did not greatly admire.

McLeish's faults were all virtues: he was generous even to those who took pitiless advantage of him (his last afternoon before he was finally stricken was spent rewriting a chapter which one of his publishers had carelessly mislaid), and he had no time for anger, despite the frequent cruelty of his critics.

Those who knew him loved him; those who did not missed the rare pleasure of a classicist without pedantry, a polymath without conceit and a professional without cynicism. In everything he did he was unselfishly (and unslavishly) supported by a wife to whom loyalty was second nature. Theirs was a marriage of true minds: McLeish would never have been what he was without Valerie. He was very proud to have been elected FRSL earlier this year. It was the only gesture of formal recognition he received from a culture to which he made an outstanding contribution.

He is survived by his wife Valerie, and by their sons.

THE REV BOB JONES Jr

The Rev Bob Jones Jr, American fundamentalist preacher and president of Bob Jones University, South Carolina, 1947-71, died on November 12 aged 86. He was born on October 19, 1911.

FOR more than half a century Bob Jones Jr dominated Bob Jones University, the centrepiece of the Evangelical empire built up by his father, Bob Jones Sr, and a Christian institution often referred to as "the fundamentalist West Point".

Like his father, Jones Jr was a fiery orator and deep political conservative. Under his regime the university became an influential force not only within Christian fundamentalism but, by extension, in American right-wing politics. It also became embroiled in a controversial Supreme Court case over race relations, which ended with its being stripped of its tax exempt status. In Britain, it is perhaps best known as the institution which conferred a doctorate on the Rev Ian Paisley.

Jones Jr became acting president of the university in 1932, five years after his father had founded the institution that bore his name. He was formally made president in 1947. Even after handing over the running of the institution to his own son, Bob Jones III, in 1971, he continued to preach each week on campus, and was known by the students simply as "Dr Bob".

Throughout his often tempestuous tenure, Jones remained uncompromising. He had no desire to see Bob Jones University properly accredited as an institute of higher education. Instead, he aggressively endorsed his father's view that the university should stand without apology for old-time religion and the absolute authority of the Bible. The South Carolina campus enforces a ban on smoking, drinking, sexual relations and inter-racial dating, while students attend Bible study daily. Many become Evangelical preachers themselves.

To this day, home economics classes teach women that the Bible sets the standards for female dress, while in theology lectures students are taught that women are inferior to men, but have responsibilities of their own.

Until 1975 Bob Jones University did not admit blacks, and the ban on inter-racial dating is still enforced today. This colour bar eventually dragged Jones to the Supreme Court: in 1970 the US Internal Revenue Service withdrew the university's tax exempt status, arguing that the racial bans amounted to discrimination.

Jones contended that the ban was biblically sanctioned, and the policy protected under the freedom of religion clause in the Constitution. In court his lawyer also argued that it was "an egregious offence to religious liberty for the IRS to insist the school trade its theological birthright for a pottage of tax exemptions". President Reagan sought to revoke the 1970 policy in 1982, but the US Supreme Court ruled that the IRS was correct.

Bob Jones Jr was no respecter of persons, even those whom the world supposed to be on his own side. He denounced Billy Graham — who had briefly been a student at his own university — as a good man undone by liberalism, and he fell out with the evangelist Jerry Falwell over the latter's willingness to build relationships with Roman Catholics and Jews. When Pope John Paul II visited South Carolina, Jones remarked that he would sooner speak with the devil than with the pontiff.

But friends insisted that his fire and brimstone persona concealed a softer side. He was a Shakespearean enthusiast and interpreter, and founded the university's repertory group, the Classic Players. He was also an avid art collector, owning more than 400 religious paintings, including works by Rembrandt, Rubens and Van Dyck, which he housed in the Bob Jones University Collection of Sacred Art.

He was the author of 15 books, including the novel *Wine of Morning*, later made into a film, and an autobiography, *Cornbread and Caviar*. He wrote a syndicated column *A Look at the Book*, which was carried in 300 newspapers and magazines around the world.

He is survived by his wife Fannie-May, two sons and a daughter.

WILLIE PASTRANO

Willie Pastrano, world light-heavyweight boxing champion, 1963-65, died of cancer in New Orleans on December 6 aged 62. He was born on November 27, 1935.

A VIVIDLY handsome man who admitted to preferring a session with a pretty girl to one in the gym, Willie Pastrano fooled many an opponent by his sleek looks and seeming nonchalance in the ring. Though not a big puncher, he had extremely fast hands and his speed kept him out of trouble against many bigger men who fancied themselves to knock him out.

Given his fistic equipment and tactical sense, he might well have expected to win a world title earlier than he did. But in the 1950s and early 1960s the light-heavyweight division was the domain of the evergreen and unassailably talented Archie Moore, who held the title for ten years. And though Pastrano fought many heavyweights, he was never naturally big enough himself to make a mark at the top level in that division.

Unusually for an American, one of Pastrano's principal weapons was a very English straight left. This went down well in Britain and, in the years before he became world champion, he had a number of bouts in this country against rising home-grown heavyweight prospects. He was to return as world champion in 1964 when Terry Downes, who had moved up to light-heavyweight after holding the world middleweight crown, challenged him for his title at Belle Vue, Manchester. As the big punching Downes discovered, Pastrano's speed, and his eye for the main chance, was his greatest asset. A fight Downes thought he had won suddenly slipped from his grasp in the eleventh round.

Wilfred Pastrano was born in New Orleans. A predilection for spaghetti made him a chubby child and cost him a good deal of ridicule from his schoolmates. But after beginning boxing training with Whitey Esenault in Miami, he took a stone off his 6ft frame and was soon easily able to make the light-heavyweight limit of 12st 7lb.

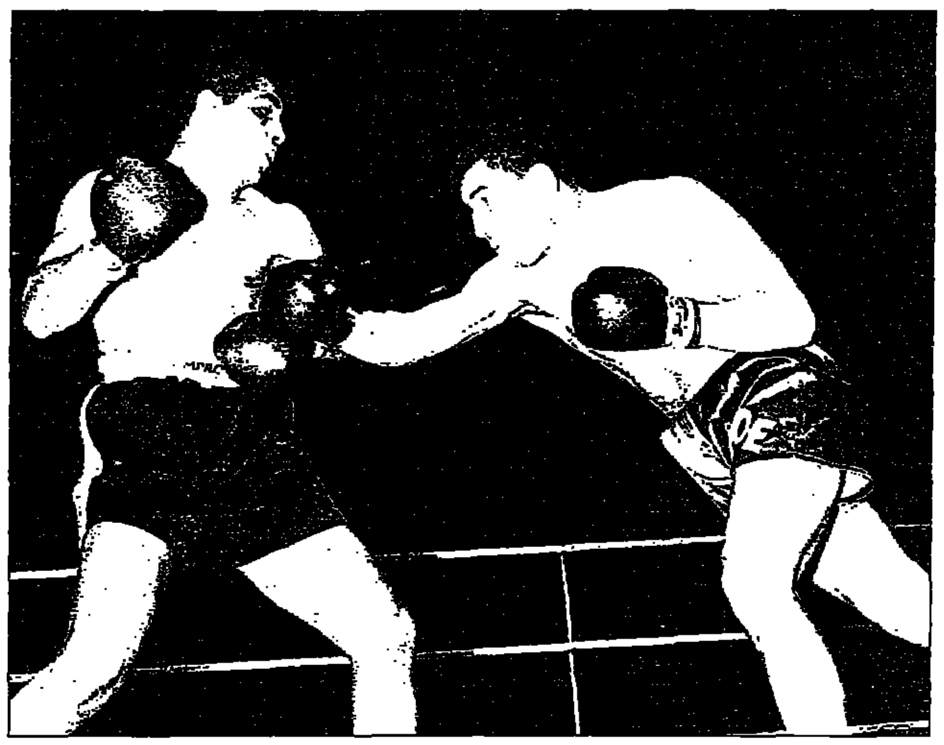
Turning professional in 1951, he trained under Angelo Dundee at his famous Fifth Street Gym in Miami, evolving a running, dancing style that earned him the nickname "Willie the Wisp". The effectiveness of his methods was not lost on the young Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) who was another of Dundee's fighters at that time. Indeed, Ali owed his start as a boxer to Pastrano, who had originally persuaded Dundee to see the 17-year-old Clay after the trainer had told him over the phone to "get lost".

Over the next few years Pastrano reeled off a series of wins over domestic opposition before going overseas in 1957 for the first of his visits to Britain. His opponent at Harringay Arena, London, was the Welsh heavyweight Dick Richardson, later to be European Champion. But stepping up a division was no problem for Pastrano. Though giving away three inches and 10lb, he easily evaded the Welshman's bull-like rushes, cutting him to ribbons with a stream of jabs and hooks to head and body, in a ten-round points victory.

He returned to Britain in the following year to beat Brian London and Joe Bygraves, though both British boxers acquitted themselves creditably in what were closely fought points victories. And when Pastrano returned to Britain in September 1958 for a return match with London, the big Blackpool man — by now British champion — had some surprises for the speedy light-heavyweight, crowding him from the first bell and using his 18lb weight advantage to shove him round the ring. For once the Pastrano footwork failed to be effective, and in the third round he sustained a cut eye which impelled the referee to step in and halt the bout in London's favour, in the fifth.

If this could be written down as bad luck, worse was to follow for Pastrano when he returned to Britain in February 1959 to meet the Cardiff heavyweight Joe Erskine. No puncher, Erskine nevertheless shared many of Pastrano's qualities of skill and speed, and to the surprise of everyone at the ringside it was his left jab which dominated the fight, not Pastrano's. As the rounds unfolded, Pastrano was treated to punching as cultured as his own, and Erskine's points victory after ten rounds was by a wide margin.

Pastrano had a somewhat patchy next two years. To the exasperation of Dundee his indefatigable womanising always threatened to undermine his fight preparations; it was a constant battle to haul him out from between the sheets and chivvy him into the training ring. He even suffered a points defeat at the hands of the mediocre Chic Calderwood in Glasgow in September 1960, and it was not until he divided honours evenly with Archie Moore in 1962, in a non-title bout, that he seemed to recover his early promise.



Evasive action: Pastrano sways away from a Joe Erskine right hand in what was, however, to be a points defeat for the American in London in February 1959

When Harold Johnson became the new light-heavyweight champion, Pastrano at last obtained a shot at the world title in Las Vegas in June 1963. Johnson, a fearsome puncher, had chosen Pastrano as an opponent not likely to give him much trouble: he was comprehensively outpointed over 15 rounds.

Pastrano defended the title twice, knocking out Gregorio Peralta in six rounds in Miami in April 1964 and Terry Downes in November. In its early rounds, the Downes fight promised a return of the world title to Britain for the first time since Bob Fitzsimmons, as the tough, US Marines-trained Downes belted the seemingly lethargic Pastrano round the ring. But after some stern words from Dundee, punctuated with a resounding wallop on the backside, Pastrano pulled himself together for the eleventh, and after flooring the Londoner for a count of eight, knocked him out. He was eventually relieved of his title in March 1965 by Jose Torres, a man with all Pastrano's skills and a big punch to boot. At that point he decided to hang up his gloves. For some years he struggled, not entirely successfully, to support his large family in Miami. But eventually he retired to his native New Orleans, where he took up youth work.

Pastrano is survived by his wife and nine children.

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ON THIS DAY

December 11, 1877

This letter from a British doctor working for a relief organisation in Bulgaria makes clear that the Red Cross, the British branch of which started in 1870, was already effective.

WAR VICTIMS IN BULGARIA

Dear Lord Bath — I am writing this at a resting place for the huge convoys of wounded and sick which come in a continuous dismal stream from the front. Last night about 200 arrived in 20 small country carts drawn by ponies. As I travelled along the road our course was frequently blocked by these carts slowly toiling on their way.

I was most hospitably received by Mr. Baggavont, a gentleman of the Imperial Court, and now a delegate for the Red Cross Society. He lives in a felt tent, a most admirable contrivance for cold weather. For some time past the convoys of wounded have been received here after six hours' travelling, and lodged for the night, after being fed and having their wounds dressed. A large number of Turks as well as Russians have been equally cared for. Hastily-made calico bags stuffed with straw were laid on a damp mud floor, and on these the patients were placed. This wooden shed is better than the open air, but not much, and on the approach of winter it is absolutely necessary to have something better. That something I have undertaken to provide. In conjunction with Mr. Baggavont I am going to make this big shed a comparatively comfortable building by doubling the walls, etc.

The cost of all this, including the repair of some ruined buildings for hospitals, will be about £1,200, and as it will certainly save hundreds of lives I am sure the committee will not shrink at the figures, though, alas, it will about empty our coffers. This depot of wounded has already received and succoured about 25,000 sick and wounded. The arrival of the convoys is a distressing sight. The sick are easily dealt with, but the movement of the wounded often creates agony. They have settled in their straw at the bottom of the cart, and there they have lain suffering a dull, endurable pain, but the lifting out of the carts causes the air to be filled with shrieks and moans. Many things are wanted to alleviate the dreadful sufferings of gallant men and simple peasants who had but one strong idea in marching to battle: the deliverance of an oppressed people. They may be backward in civilization but a Russian remarked: "True it is, but if civilization leads to an absorption in self-interest and utter indifference to the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, then I pray God we may never be civilized." Day by day I see how much we may be able to help the Russian Red Cross in its noble work ...

THE TIMES TODAY

THURSDAY DECEMBER 11 1997

NEWS

Minister quits over lone parents

■ A Government minister resigned and several ministerial aides were poised to quit as Tony Blair last night faced his biggest revolt since the general election.

The rebellion over benefit cuts for single parents escalated when Malcolm Chisholm, the Scottish Office Minister, left his post saying that he could not vote for "an attack on some of the poorest women in society". Then Gordon Prentice, a parliamentary private secretary, went as well .... **Pages 1, 12**

EU's woolly line on lamb chops

■ Scientists in Brussels caused confusion throughout Europe by calling for a ban on lamb containing spinal bone because of a risk that it might be infected with the "mad cow" disease BSE. However, it was not clear from this "preliminary advice" whether ordinary lamb chops would be affected .... **Page 1**

Coal reprieve

Tony Blair announced a surprise reprieve for the coal industry in an attempt to save thousands of mining jobs. He extended contracts with RJB Mining until next June .... **Page 2**

Discordant note

An adult chorister was sacked from a cathedral choir because he had offered the boy singers £9 to be sick on a tour bus so he could get off and have a cigarette, a tribunal heard .... **Page 3**

Nifty knickers

Lower sixth pupils from Tiffin Girls' School, southwest London, have set up a company to make and market a fashion item that combines novelty with utility: knickers with pockets ...... **Page 6**

Swimming scandal

Hamilton Bland, the BBC "voice of swimming", faces an ultimatum over his alleged conflict of interest involving National Lottery money .... **Page 8**

Warming to their task

The world's industrial nations adopted a draft protocol which would legally bind them to cut back the emission of greenhouse gases .... **Pages 9, 23**

Sponsors' season

Viewers are going to face a deluge of sponsored programmes on ITV over the holiday season with Panasonic and Toyota dividing the sponsorship credits... **Page 10**

Mowlam admission

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, admitted on the eve of Gerry Adams's visit to Downing Street that she would "look a fool" if the IRA returns to violence...................... **Pages 11, 23**

The new Jemima

Jemima Khan's transformation from Western socialite to protagonist of conservative eastern values has delighted Pakistanis. In two newspaper articles she extols Pakistani family life........ **Page 14**

Zimbabwe threat

The Zimbabwe Government reacted imperiously in the face of an overwhelming display of anti-government sentiment this week, with a threat that police would shoot demonstrators .... **Page 15**

Capital transfer

Kazakhstan transferred its capital to the bleak town of Akmola, 700 miles north of Almaty. No diplomats have moved with the protesting bureaucrats ... **Page 16**

Eiffel egg

French millennium celebration plans include multicoloured plastic fish swimming in a perfumed Seine and the Eiffel Tower laying a huge luminous egg ...... **Page 17**

Getty museum opens

The new J. Paul Getty Centre, which houses a famously eccentric art collection, opens next week on a hilltop above Los Angeles .... **Page 18**

Speeding driver clocked at 154mph

■ A motorist who recorded Britain's fastest offence of speeding on four wheels was banned for eight months. Anthony Fear was found guilty of driving at 154mph on the M5 in Devon as he put his newly-acquired £85,000 Aston Martin DB7 through its paces. He said he did not realise how fast the car would go. "It wasn't explained to me when I bought it" .... **Page 3**

MAURO PILONE/AP

Manchester United supporters arriving at Turin airport for the European Cup Champions' League match against Juventus.

BUSINESS

ISA review: The Government is coming under intense pressure to increase the proposed £50,000 limit for contributing to an Individual Savings Account, the replacement for Tessas and Peps .... **Page 27**

Dream ends: Mike Firth's hope of making Yorkshire Food Group a world player in dried fruit and nuts ended when the company went into receivership......................... **Page 27**

United bid: United News & Media is expected to offer in excess of £750 million for IPC, the consumer magazines group recently put on sale by Reed Elsevier .... **Page 27**

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 46.4 to 5,130.7. The pound index fell to 103.9 from 104.1, with sterling up 0.58 cents to $1.6514 and down 0.88 pfennig to DM2.9441 .... **Page 30**

SPORT

Football: Charlton Athletic terminated the contract of Jamie Stuart, 18 months before it was due to expire, after he admitted taking marjuana and cocaine .... **Page 52**

Rugby union: Lewis Capes, son of the international shot putter, Geoff Capes, and a former American footballer, has agreed a two-year deal Leicester .... **Page 48**

Cricket: England's women launched their defence of the World Cup with a convincing victory over South Africa in a rain-reduced match in Hyderabad .... **Page 49**

Racing: Responding to criticisms of Sheikh Mohammed that may lead to his withdrawal from British racing, the Government denied that the industry was suffering from overtaxation........................ **Page 47**

Brosnan's Dream: Ten years ago Pierce Brosnan thought he had lost the chance to play James Bond for ever. Now he is celebrating the release of his second Bond film, *Tomorrow Never Dies*....... **Page 36**

007 Revisited: "Like all Bond films, *Tomorrow Never Dies* will pull in the crowds, but it is likely to send them out into the world a little more desensitised," says Geoff Brown..................................... **Page 37**

Classical CDs: Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu are ideally matched as the lovers in Puccini's *La rondine*, one of the best albums of the year .... **Page 38**

Jazz priestess: Nina Simone, one of the greatest popular voices of the postwar era, is to star at London's Womad festival................ **Page 39**

FEATURES

Russia's new Tolstoy: The Russian Booker Prize, which is now in its seventh year, has galvanised the country's writers to produce controversial winners, Jason Cowley reports.................................. **Page 19**

Medical report: Dr Thomas Stuttaford on the misdiagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, early symptoms of bowel cancer, genital abnormalities and recurrent nosebleeds .... **Page 20**

Christmas travel: Best bargains for the festive season .... **Page 42**

Reviews: Were they forgeries? Roy Foster discusses the journals of Roger Casement, the Irish nationalist; plus Sheila Rowbotham on the lives of Hannah Sheehy Skeffington and Harriot Stanton Blatch, two "advanced women" and pioneer feminists **Pages 40, 41**

Rather than being a Muslim show of strength, the Tehran Islamic summit is a mirror image of the crisis of identity in the Islamic world. Pan-Islamism is a chimera, but so are the alternatives such as Arab nationalism. The truth is that today a fifth of humanity is still seeking certainties and fixed points of reference. The summit merely confirms that there is no one Islamic centre — *La Repubblica*

Preview: How sound is Greenpeace's case? *Scare Stories* (BBC2, 9.25pm). **Review:** Joe Joseph cannot feel sorry for the Guinness family........ **Pages 50, 51**

OPINION

On democracy's steps

There are ominous signs that elements within republicanism itch to return to what a Sinn Fein councillor called "what we know best". He was not referring to handling welfare complaints.................. **Page 23**

Seventeen-year itch

Mr Mugabe has alienated Parliament, large sections of his own party, the clear majority of the population, and overseas investors. He could and should relent and embrace radical change... **Page 23**

Don't mock Tudor

Bolsover is wise to let sleeping timbers lie, even if they are zebra-painted cladding................ **Page 23**

COLUMNS

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

A Guernsey trust is a very tax efficient way of holding assets. I do not think that such a trust could be set up without the intention of avoiding tax .... **Page 22**

TIM CONGDON

A risk that living standards might fall over extended periods — five years or more — can be identified in France, Italy and other European countries .... **Page 22**

WILFRED BECKERMAN

There is good reason to believe that the general effects of climate change for the world as a whole would be beneficial. This is chiefly because global warming would increase food production ..... **Page 22**

JOHN BRYANT

Student sport today finds itself in a strange position. All the talk is of professionalism, and yet somehow it has managed to carve out a niche in the crazily overcrowded sporting calendar by clinging to its best amateur traditions .... **Page 50**

OBITUARIES

Kenneth McLeish, author and editor; **Willie Pastrano**, boxer; **The Rev Bob Jones Jr**, fundamentalist preacher .... **Page 25**

LETTERS

State pensions; parking tax; *Britannia*; Gibraltar; Pakistan democracy; peeling sprouts......... **Page 23**

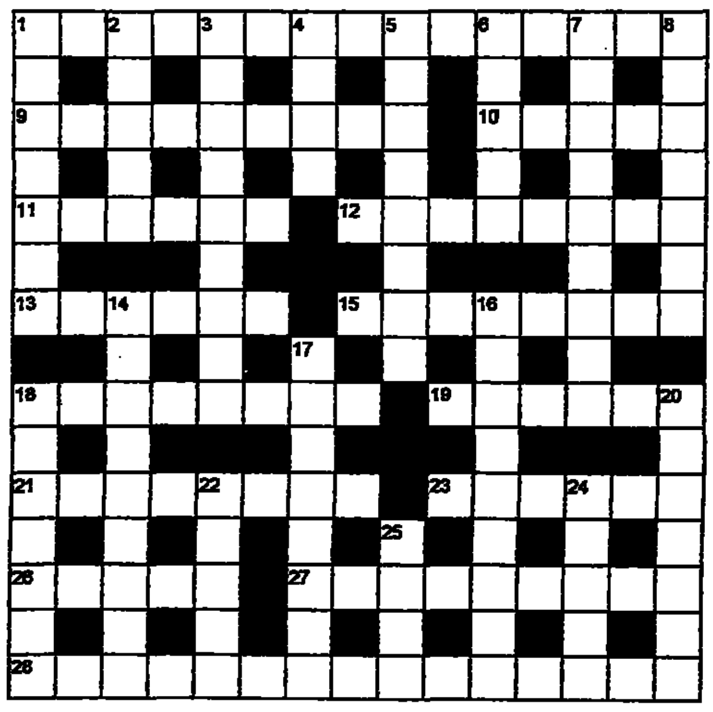
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **POP**
David Sinclair's records of the year, from the Spice Girls to the Rolling Stones

■ **MEDIA**
Raymond Snoddy talks to Richard Branson about the Virgin FM takeover

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,660



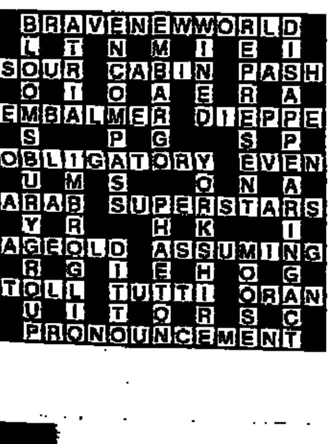
ACROSS

1 Subject to climatic conditions, suffering from cold, perhaps (5,3,7).
9 Anticipate floaters switching to left (9).
10 One turned up in books what computers can deal with (5).
11 Soldiers reprimanded for conspicuous bloomer (6).
12 Right about name of particular group of people (8).
13 Headgear appropriate for City on tycoon's head (6).
15 Devoted admirer's off-putting confession? (8).
18 Old-fashioned military honour that's very evident therein (8).
19 A US city housewife in a disorderly state (6).
21 Disconnected passage in musical rejected by censor (8).
23 Chased policemen off (6).
26 A second bird seen in tree (5).
27 Free, without a single charge (9).
28 For Mohawks and Choctaws, one must go with expedition (3,4,6,2).

DOWN

1 Frank at university joins an organised political group (7).
2 Rustic medic covers the smallest state (5).
3 Banish curate? It's unusual (9).
4 Man attending part of competition (4).
5 Boring job that makes you rich? (4-2-2).
6 Dress, in general, ignored (5).
7 Game demanding nip (whisky) (9).
8 Reptile — a fine specimen (7).
14 Privileged treatment given by racecourse to favourite (3,6).
16 Feature eccentric men in tale (9).
17 Keep head down after period of abstinence (8).
18 Frenzied excitement over a no-good horse (7).
20 Duck winged in a particular way (7).
22 Part of chapter in literature accepted as genuine (5).
24 Credit fool with no brains (5).
25 Catch pirate (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,659



BRAVENEWWORLD
L T N M I E I
SOUR CABIN PASH
O I O A E R A
EMBALMER DIEPPE
S P G S P
OBLIGATORY EVEN
U M S O N A
ARAB SUPERSTARS
Y R H K I
AGEOLD ASSUMING
R G I E H O G
TOLL TUTTI ORAN
U I T O R S C
PRONOUNCEMENT

Times Two Crossword, page 52

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: London and Southampton weather centres, 15C (59F); lowest day max: Loch Glascarnoch, Highland, 6C (43F); highest rainfall: Capel Curig, Caernarfon, 2.01in; highest sunshine: Exmouth, Devon, 4.2hr

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 43.6% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the second half of 1996

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FORECAST

☐ **General:** England and Wales will start very wet, but the rain should move away northeastwards quite quickly. The rest of the day will be mild and blustery with brief sunny spells and occasional squally showers. Northern Ireland will also start dull with spells of rain, but it should soon become drier with a little brightness. Southern Scotland will start dull and damp but will be drier and brighter later. Northern Scotland will have sunny spells and a few showers. Tonight, rain over northern England and Scotland will slowly move southeastwards.

☐ **London, E Anglia, E Midlands, W Midlands:** rain followed by sunshine and showers. Fresh to strong southwest wind. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **SE England, Central S England, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales:** early rain, then a mix of hefty showers and sunny spells. Strong southwest wind. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **E England, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N, NE England:** rain clearing, then drier for a time before rain returns later. Moderate to fresh variable wind. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, Argyll:** showers or longer spells of rain. Becoming drier and colder from the northwest later. Moderate to fresh northwest wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **NE Scotland, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** showers but becoming drier and brighter later, moderate to fresh northwest wind. Max 8C (46F).

☐ **N Ireland:** early rain then sunshine and blustery showers. Fresh northwest wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** showers, heavy and prolonged for a time, dying out later. Wind mostly west or northwest, strong or gale, easing later. Max 8C (46F).

☐ **Outlook:** the South and East will become mostly dry and bright, but it will be colder with night frosts. The North and West will start brighter and colder, but it will turn mild and damp.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

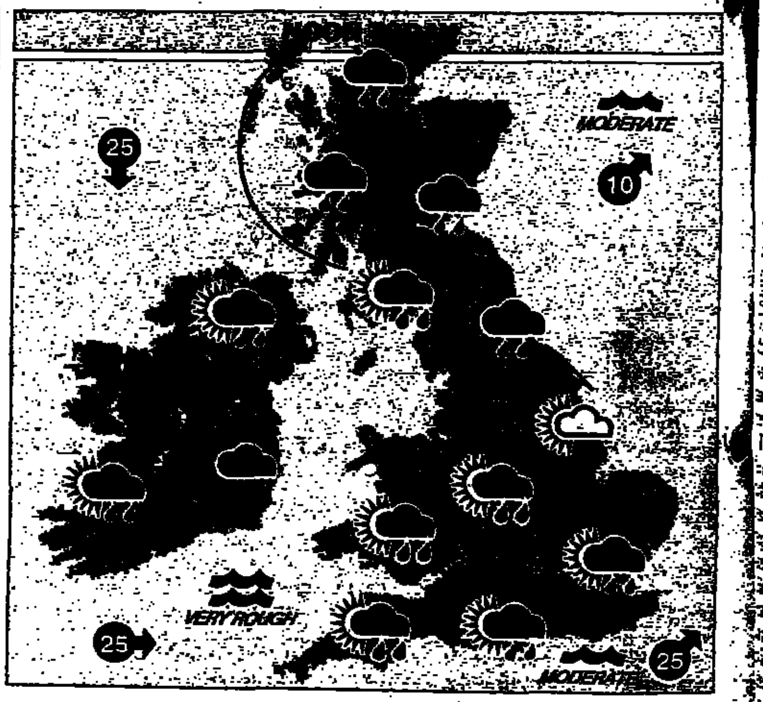
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	-	0.09	7	45	r
Anglesey	1.0	1.02	13	55	g
Aspatria	-	0.43	12	54	r
Aviemore	-	0.30	7	45	r
Belfast	0.6	0.34	11	52	sh
Birmingham	2.3	0.22	13	55	sh
Bognor R	3.6	0.33	13	55	b
Bournem'th	2.1	0.38	15	59	b
Bristol	2.1	0.47	12	54	r
Buxton	-	0.50	11	52	du
Cardiff	3.5	0.32	13	55	sh
Clacton	3.4	0.19	14	57	r
Cleethorpes	X				
Colwyn Bay	1.7	0.37	14	57	c
Cromer	2.0	0.46	14	57	b
Dunbar	X				
Eastbourne	X				
Edinburgh	0.1	0.35	9	48	r
Eskdalemuir	-	0.87	10	50	sh
Exmouth	4.2	0.16	14	57	s
Falmouth	3.0	0.21	14	57	c
Fishguard	0.9	0.35	12	54	b
Folkestone	2.3	0.47	14	57	r
Glasgow	-	0.49	8	46	r
Guernsey	2.7	0.26	15	59	b
Hastings	1.5	0.47	13	55	r
Hayling I.	3.2	0.35	14	57	r
Herne Bay	2.8	0.20	15	59	b
Hove	1.6	X	13	55	b
Hunstanton	X	0.36	13	55	r
Isle-of-man	1.6	0.81	13	55	b
Isle-of-wight	3.2	0.60	13	55	b
Jersey	0.8	0.30	14	57	r
Kinloss	-	0.09	8	46	r
Leeds	3.2	0.40	14	57	sh
Lerwick	-	0.09	8	46	sh
Leuchars	0.1	0.30	8	46	r
Littlehmptn	2.5	0.33	15	59	r
London	1.7	0.16	15	59	b
Lowestoft	2.1	0.37	14	57	r
Manchester	1.1	0.29	14	57	sh
Margate	2.9	0.16	15	59	sh
Minehead	0.8	0.32	14	57	sh
Morecambe	X				
Newcastle	X	X	X	X	
Newquay	X				
Norwich	3.1	0.35	15	59	r
Oxford	3.0	0.21	13	55	b
Penzance	X	0.35	14	57	sh
Poole	3.8	0.44	15	59	s
Prestatyn	X	0.38	14	57	b
Ross-o-wye	1.8	0.24	14	57	g
Saunton Snd	-	0.43	13	55	du
Scarboro'	2.3	0.43	13	55	g
Shrewsbury	2.8	0.12	13	55	sh
Skegness	4.1	0.22	14	57	s
Southend	2.5	0.13	15	59	r
Southport	1.9	0.59	13	55	b
Southsea	3.5	0.29	15	59	r
Stornoway	1.1	0.07	8	46	r
Swanage	4.0	0.35	14	57	sh
Teignmouth	2.5	0.28	14	57	b
Tenby	-	0.52	14	57	c
Tiree	1.5	0.87	10	50	r
Torquay	3.2	0.43	14	57	b
Tynemouth	-	0.50	13	55	f
West-s-mare	X				
Weymouth	3.8	0.15	14	57	s

ABROAD

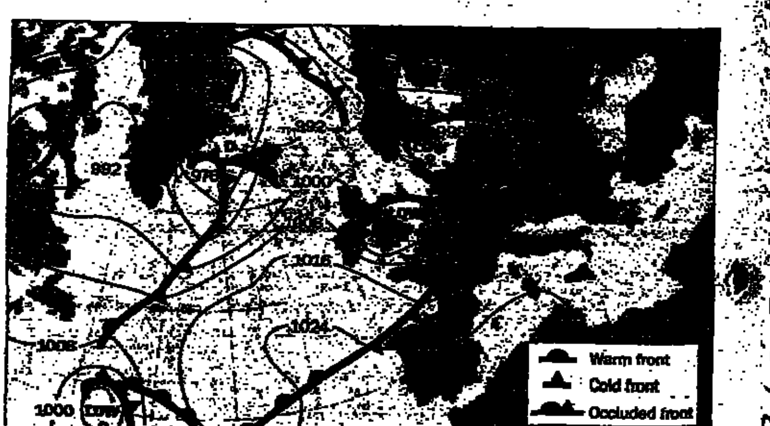
	C	F			C	F	
Ajaccio	15	59	f	C'phagn	5	41	c
Akrotiri	17	63	f	Dublin	10	50	s
Alex'dria	17	63	c	Dubrovnik	X		
Algiers	17	63	s	Faro	18	64	c
Amst'dm	10	50	r	Florence	6	43	f
Athens	9	48	c	Frankfurt	5	41	r
B Aires	21	70	r	Funchal	21	70	s
Bahrain	22	72	s	Geneva	7	45	c
Bangkok	30	86	s	Gibraltar	19	66	s
Barbados	29	84	s	Helsinki	2	36	d
Barcelona	14	57	s	Hong K	X		
Beirut	17	63	f	Innsbrck	6	43	f
Belgrade	X			Istanbul	8	46	f
Berlin	6	43	c	Jeddah	32	90	f
Bermuda	20	68	s	Jo'burg	26	79	f
Biarritz	13	55	f	Karachi	X		
Bord'x	13	55	r	L Angels	14	57	s
Brussels	9	48	f	L Palmas	23	73	f
Budapest	-2	28	f	Le Touqt	11	52	f
Cairo	18	64	f	Lisbon	11	52	s
Cape Tn	24	75	c	Locarno	5	41	s
Chicago	1	34	f	Luxembg	6	43	d
Cologne	10	50	f	Luxor	22	72	c
Corfu	13	55	f	Madrid	6	43	c

	C	F			C	F	
Majorca	16	61	f	Rome	13	55	f
Malaga	21	70	s	S Frisco	10	50	s
Malta	17	63	s	S Paulo	X		
Melb'rne	18	64	c	Salzburg	7	45	f
Mexico C	X			Santiago	23	73	s
Miami	29	84	s	Seoul	-3	27	f
Milan	6	43	c	Sing'por	29	84	r
Montreal	-4	25	-	St'kholm	X		
Moscow	-9	16	c	Strasb'rg	7	45	f
Munich	7	45	c	Sydney	X		
N Delhi	16	61	r	Tangier	19	66	f
N York	4	39	f	Tel Aviv	18	64	f
Nairobi	24	75	f	Tenerife	24	75	s
Naples	12	54		Tokyo	16	61	c
Nice	11	52	s	Toronto	1	34	c
Oslo	7	45	c	Tunis	17	63	f
Paris	9	48	c	Valencia	18	64	s
Peking	-3	27	s	Vanc'ver	5	41	f
Perth	33	91	s	Venice	8	46	s
Prague	5	41	s	Vienna	2	36	c
Reykjavik	3	37	f	Warsaw	4	39	c
Rhodes	15	59	s	Wash'ton	4	39	c
Rio de J	26	79	f	Wel'ngton	18	64	
Riyadh	24	75	f	Zurich	3	37	c

Temperatures at midday local time on Wednesday X = not available



Changes to the chart below from noon: low Y will continue to drift east; low B will move east and fill; low C will drift northeast and fill. High pressure will be maintained over the western Mediterranean



HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	10.28	6.5	23.14	7.0	Leith	11.39	5.3	23.53	5.4
Aberdeen	10.32	4.0	22.39	4.2	Liverpool	08.04	8.5	20.28	9.0
Avonmouth	03.41	11.6	16.18	12.3	Lowestoft	05.42	2.4	18.58	2.4
Belfast	07.48	3.2	20.04	3.4	Margate	08.31	4.5	21.22	4.6
Cardiff	03.27	10.7	16.01	11.4	Milford Haven	02.54	6.1	15.21	6.5
Devonport	02.18	4.9	14.42	5.2	Newquay	01.53	6.1	14.19	6.5
Dover	07.51	6.2	20.23	6.2	Oban	02.53	3.3	15.17	3.3
Dublin (N Wall)	08.43	3.8	20.51	4.1	Penzance	01.21	4.9	13.45	5.2
Falmouth	01.49	4.7	14.13	5.0	Portland	03.22	1.8	15.39	1.9
Greenock	09.16	3.3	21.49	3.5	Portsmouth	08.27	4.6	20.45	4.5
Harwich	08.10	3.7	21.02	3.9	Shoreham	07.56	5.8	20.28	5.8
Holyhead	07.20	5.2	19.33	5.5	Southampton	07.35	4.4	19.58	4.4
Hull (Albert D)	02.42	7.6	15.38	8.1	Swansea	02.59	8.4	15.28	8.9
Ilfracombe	02.39	8.1	15.09	8.6	Tees	00.00	4.9	12.51	5.0
King's Lynn	02.46	6.0	15.43	6.1	Walton-on-N	08.15	3.8	21.01	4.1

Heights in metres.

Sun rises: 7.58 am
Sun sets: 3.52 pm
Moon sets 4.16 am
Moon rises 2.38 pm

London 3.52 pm to 7.57 am
Bristol 4.02 pm to 8.07 am
Edinburgh 3.38 pm to 8.35 am
Manchester 3.49 pm to 8.16 am
Penzance 4.20 pm to 8.12 am

Full moon December 14

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هكذا من الأهل

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY DECEMBER 11 1997

Isa limit of £50,000 will be open to review

By Caroline Merrell

THE Government has admitted that the proposed £50,000 limit for contributing to an Individual Savings Account (Isa) could be reviewed, along with all other aspects of the controversial proposals.

A Treasury spokeswoman emphasised yesterday that the document outlining Isas, the Government's tax-free replacement for tax exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) and personal equity plans (Peps), was purely for consultation. The final rules governing Isas could be very different, she said.

The plans for accounts were launched last week in a blaze of bad publicity. Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, who unveiled the Isa has himself come under press scrutiny over £12 million held offshore in a tax haven.

In announcing Isas, he claimed that the £50,000 limit, which will also apply to those rolling over their Pep funds, would affect only a few rich people.

Government figures on those hit by the limit varied between 300,000 and 750,000, while the Pep providers pointed out that there was no way to work out how many investors had more than £50,000 in their Pep schemes.

Under the Isa proposals, those with more than £50,000 will become liable to capital gains tax and income tax on the excess after October 1999. The reason for the lifetime threshold on Isa contributions was to curtail the amount of tax relief given out to savers by the Government.

The aim was to redistribute the estimated £1.7 billion cost to the revenue of Peps in the year 2000 among many more people — the Government wants six million more to save.

However Pep companies point out that this is probably also an erroneous assumption. David Mossop, chief executive of Perpetual, one of the UK's biggest Pep providers, said that many of those who could be affected had been using Peps to supplement, or even replace, a pension — both schemes offer tax breaks.

He said: "Many will simply sell their holdings tax-free before the October deadline, and then move the money into a pension." Pension contributions are tax-exempt, which is a cost to the exchequer.

M&G, another big Pep provider, said that 50 per cent of their Pep holders used the plans to supplement retirement income. The £50,000 limit means that many now face retrospective tax on this income.

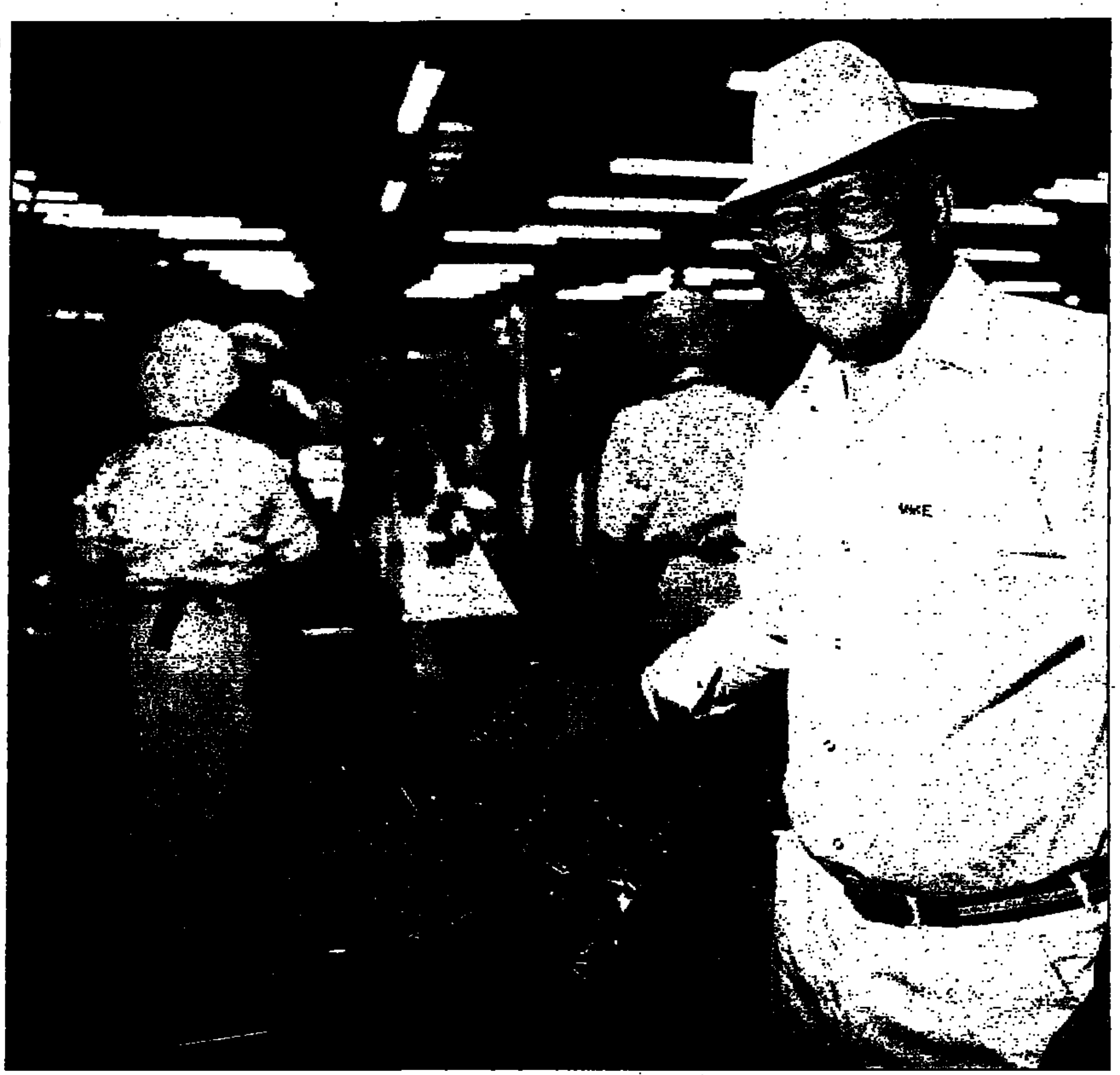
A spokeswoman for the company said that it did not believe that a lifetime limit on contributions was necessary.

Philip Warland, director-general of the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds (Autif), the trade organisation that represents the fund industry, said that increasing the limit to £75,000 would mean that most who had been using Peps for their retirement would not be affected. He said: "Monitoring the £50,000 limit will be horrendously complex and expensive, when the plan is supposed to be simple."

Mr Warland was also concerned that the Revenue would have to overhaul its computer system to ensure that savers did not break the rules — this, he claimed, would be another expense.

Rowan Gormley, managing director of Virgin Direct, criticised the Government for not taking the opportunity to legislate on charges. He pointed out that these have a far greater impact on returns than tax relief. He said: "We are going to be advocating a £70,000 limit."

Commentary, page 29



Mike Firth's dream of creating a world player foundered yesterday when Yorkshire Food collapsed under its debts

Yorkshire Food calls in receivers

By Dominic Walsh

THE dream of Mike Firth to turn Yorkshire Food Group into a world player in the dried fruit and nuts business ended in tatters yesterday when the company collapsed into receivership, just four-and-a-half years after floating.

The appointment yesterday afternoon of receivers from Deloitte & Touche followed the suspension of its shares at 8½p. Last month, in the wake of interim losses of £13.7 million and the latest in a long line of profit warnings, Yorkshire said it was in talks with Rabobank New York over its future funding. At the last count it owed £53.1 million.

Nick Dargan, joint administrative receiver, said he planned to continue to run the business pending disposal. Its US interests, including the Del Monte dried fruit range, operate mainly in California.

City analysts, who blamed the group's woes on a botched entry into the US market, cited Dole Food, its US rival that has a 9.66 per cent stake, and Chiquita Brands International as likely bidders for the American parts of the business.

Mr Firth, who held almost 20 per cent of the shares, is a larger than life former Butlin's "red coat" and failed rock guitarist. He was the driving force behind the creation of the Yorkshire Business Conference, at which speakers included Henry Kissinger, General Sir Peter de la Billière and Lord Healey.

Mr Firth said at its launch in 1995 that he wanted to replace the stereotype of "the deprived, struggling North" with "the image of a go-ahead region which is a successful place in which to do business". Michael Landymore, food manufacturing analyst at Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "It's a shame, they expanded too fast."

United set to offer £750m for IPC

By Jason Nisse

UNITED News & Media, the owner of Express Newspapers and Miller Freeman, is expected to offer more than £750 million for IPC, the consumer magazines group recently put on sale by Reed Elsevier.

It is facing tough competition from a management team backed by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, the US buyout specialist, which had been considered favourites. Reed last week denied speculation that John Mellon, IPC's chairman, was to resign from the Reed board to lead the offer. Emap is also working on a bid, but faces regulatory problems; buying IPC would give it a 100 per cent market share of consumer magazine distribution.

David Arculus, who joined United, as managing director, from Emap this year, is understood to be keen on buying IPC, with titles ranging from *Country Life* to *Loaded*.

The offer will coincide with the sale of United's regional newspaper chain, expected to bring in more than £250 million. United has asked only a handful of bidders to put in firm offers by next Thursday, the day before bids have to be submitted for IPC.

Publishing sources expect UPN, the regional newspaper chain, to be sold in two parts, with Independent Newspapers, Tony O'Reilly's Irish group, buying the southern titles for £45 million and Trinity International paying more than £200 million for the northern titles, which include the *Yorkshire Post*. Other offers are expected to come from Johnston Press, Newsquest and Cinven.

United would only say it had expressed a preliminary interest in IPC.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5130.7	(-46.4)
Yield	3.18%	
FTSE All share	2407.16	(-17.65)
Nikkei	16478.12	(-208.39)
New York:		
Dow Jones	7976.58	(-73.10)*
S&P Composite	967.50	(-8.28)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5[illegible]%*	(5[illegible]%)
Long Bond	100[illegible]*	(100[illegible])
Yield	6.11%*	(6.12%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7[illegible]%	(7[illegible]%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	120[illegible]	(120[illegible])

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6500*	(1.6520)
London:		
$	1.6515	(1.6457)
DM	2.9446	(2.9533)
FFr	9.8561	(9.8856)
SFr	2.3834	(2.4065)
Yen	213.08	(213.72)
£ Index	103.9	(104.1)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.7840*	(1.7900)
FFr	5.9730*	(5.9910)
SFr	1.4450*	(1.4540)
Yen	128.85*	(129.73)
$ Index	108.2	(108.7)

Tokyo close Yen 129.85

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Feb)	$17.65	($18.00)

GOLD

London close	$283.95	($283.65)

* denotes midday trading price

Airtours up

Airtours, the tour operator, lifted full-year profits 40 per cent to £120.3 million and said that holiday bookings for next summer were 15 per cent ahead. **Page 29**
Tempus, page 30

Paper pain

The strength of sterling precipitated a sharp fall in first-half pre-tax profits at David S Smith, one of Britain's last surviving independent paper manufacturers. **Page 33**

Sears on verge of stepping out of shoe business

By Our City Staff

SEARS is believed to be on the brink of selling its Shoe Express and Shoe City chains. After being locked in discussions for several days, the troubled group is likely to announce the deals before the weekend.

Contenders for Shoe Express, which has more than 300 high street outlets, are thought to include Olivers, the rival shoe operator, Nine West, based in the US, and Philip Green, owner of the Owen Owen department stores and Mark One fashion chain.

Mr Green has already been involved in the dismantling of Sears, having bought Olympus, the sports shop business, from the group. The expanded chain is likely to be headed for the stock market next year.

David James, the company doctor brought in by Sears to sell its shrinking shoe businesses, has already sold Dolcis to Alexon. Together with JP Morgan, the merchant banker, he has been negotiating with several bidders for both Shoe Express and Shoe City, the out-of-town business which has about 80 outlets. Shoe City is thought to have attracted the attention of potential buyers from outside the footwear and fashion field who are interested in buying a parcel of out-of-town sites.

Sears is keen to finalise the disposals as quickly as possible after the Government vetoed its planned sale of Freemans, the catalogue business, to Littlewoods on monopolies grounds.

Mystery bidder increases offer for Christie's

By Jon Ashworth

A MYSTERY bidder for Christie's International has returned with a higher offer after the original terms were rejected by the fine art auctioneer this week.

The bidder's identity remained a closely guarded secret last night although sources insisted it was not Joe Lewis, the Bahamas-based investor, who has a 29.9 per cent stake in Christie's.

On Monday the company said it had received a preliminary approach, but the proposals were deemed not in the best interests of shareholders. It issued a further statement yesterday, saying the approach has now been modified, and it was discussing the terms with its advisers. The shares rose 30p to 306p, valuing the company at £515 million.

Mr Lewis spent an estimated £50 million building up a 16 per cent stake in Christie's in 1995, and subsequently increased his holding to the maximum permissible level without triggering a mandatory bid.

Parties with notifiable interests in Christie's include SPO Partners & Co, based on the American West Coast, which holds 9 per cent, and Mercury Asset Management, with 6 per cent. Schroders holds just under 6 per cent, and Toronto Dominion Bank about 4.5 per cent.

Christie's pre-tax profits rose 20 per cent to £19 million in the half year to June 30, on sales up 15 per cent at £557 million.

Comet tells a bleak mid-winter tale

Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy sees a competitive Christmas

By Alasdair Murray

KINGFISHER, the retailing group, yesterday raised fears of a bleak Christmas on the high street when it revealed a slump in sales growth in its Comet electrical chain.

The trading statement, which follows evidence of weaker than expected sales in the latest British Retail Consortium monitor, hit shares in electrical retailing stocks.

The price of Kingfisher shares fell 22½p to 828½p, while Argos lost 20p to 596½p. Dixons — which reported sales up 17 per cent during the summer — fell nearly 3 per cent, to 618½p.

Kingfisher said Comet's sales growth was only 3.4 per cent on a like-for-like basis in the third quarter, against 12.4 per cent in the first half of the year. But the group, which also Superdrug, B&Q and Woolworths, reported overall like-for-like sales growth of 7.8 per cent. Total sales rose 10.8 per cent to £1.49 billion.

Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, chief executive, said: "These figures keep us on track to achieve the year's target but fourth quarter performance will be crucial and Christmas trading is proving more competitive than ever."

City analysts said the latest figures suggested that the spending boom fuelled by windfalls is drawing to a close.

The electrical sector is also suffering from price falls prompted by the strong pound and a global glut of products. The retail price figures for November, published on Tuesday, showed electrical goods prices down 4 per cent this year.

But Nathan Cockrell, retail analyst at NatWest Markets, said although "overbloated" expectations of Christmas sales are unlikely to be matched, there is no need to panic because consumers are increasingly buying presents at the last minute.

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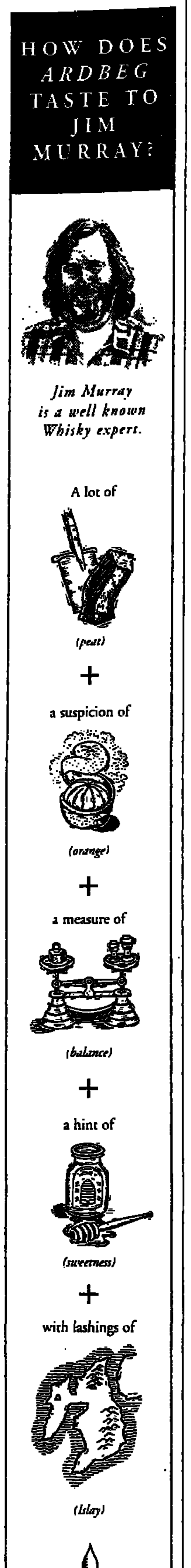

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Ardbeg

ON BALANCE, THE FINEST MALT IN THE WORLD

Declan O'Farrell, right, Metroline chief executive, riding high yesterday with John Golledge and Bert Morris

DES JENSON

Metroline on route to 42% profit increase

METROLINE, the London bus company that was floated on the stock market in July, yesterday reported pre-tax profits of £4.27 million for the year to October 10, an increase of 42 per cent over the previous year and slightly ahead of the flotation forecast.

The company is paying a maiden dividend of 1.8p a share, from earnings of 17.94p a share.

Profits rose in spite of a slight fall in turnover to £36.44 million from £37.1 million, which the company said reflected the success of its efforts to cut overheads.

Bus passenger journeys in London grew by about 4 per cent, continuing the trend of recent years, reflecting a stronger economy, increased employment and a buoyant tourist sector.

During the year Metroline invested £7.8 million on 84 new vehicles.

Metroline shares rose 3½p to 185p yesterday, against the placing price of 173p.

Bank convinced London will be ready for 1999 euro launch

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

THE Bank of England expressed its conviction yesterday that London's financial markets will be ready to offer a full range of services in the euro by its scheduled start in January 1999.

However, the Bank, which has been leading City preparations, was sufficiently concerned about the inaction by many fund managers and insurance companies to pick them out for special mention.

John Townend, deputy director at the Bank of England, said: "They can't leave everything to their banks. They must focus on the practical questions themselves. The interface between these companies and their customers will be just as affected as the banks."

Mr Townend was sanguine about the preparations being undertaken by banks in London. He said that, as far as the Bank could tell, all banks had at least thought about the issue of the single currency and were considering what measures needed to be taken.

Mr Townend said that the major banks were clearly further ahead than smaller institutions but that he saw no difference between the preparedness of leading British-owned — as opposed to foreign-owned — banks.

The sixth issue of the Bank's *Practical Issues Arising from the Introduction of the Euro*, set out for the first time the procedures that each company will have to undertake on the weekend before the introduction of the single currency.

The conversion week will span December 31, 1998 to January 4, 1999.

The weekend will involve the conversion of cash accounts in the national central securities systems together with redenomination of some or all of the outstanding debt issues of "in" governments. Even "open trades" that have not been settled yet may have to be converted in what will be an astonishingly complex operation.

Mr Townend said: "It is essential that everyone understands what will be involved that weekend. There is no magic wand. A lot of hard work needs to done."

The onus is on individual firms to be ready to cope with the demands of that weekend although the Bank has said that it will stand by to help.

"It is vital that the euro gets off to a good start," Mr Townend said.

It is not envisaged that a synchronised dry run will be undertaken because of the complexity of organising so many participants that will have reached different stages of preparedness.

Yesterday's report also detailed highly technical work being carried out in payments and settlement systems.

MPC displays unity — in public

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

THE Bank of England's monetary policy committee put on a united front in the minutes of its November meeting published yesterday but the City remained convinced that the committee is split over interest rates.

The minutes showed that the decision to raise interest rates by ¼ point last month was unanimous. But the text suggested that there is a wide range of views.

In the space of three paragraphs, the minutes put forward three different interpretations of the economic evidence.

The first was that "there was a case for not changing interest rates this month". The second was that the latest inflation projection did not, in itself, require an immediate increase in rates but that, "given the upside balance of risks, it was important to act now to meet the target".

The third interpretation was that a ¼-point rise was needed immediately and that some further increases might be necessary.

The minutes repeatedly emphasised the great degree of uncertainty with which the committee is battling.

Michael Saunders of Salomon Smith Barney said: "If rates are close to their peak, then it should not be a surprise to see an argument in the MPC (as in the City) over whether to hike again."

The committee met again early this month and decided to leave rates unchanged.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Old Mutual buys up Capel-Cure Myers

OLD MUTUAL, the South African financial services company, has bought Capel-Cure Myers, the private client stockbroker, for an undisclosed sum. Capel-Cure Myers manages around £5 billion of pensions, unit trusts and charity funds. The combined total funds under management in the UK will be £10.3 billion. Garth Griffin, Old Mutual managing director, said: "Capel-Cure Myers will bring additional focus to our penetration of the upper end of the retail investment market in the UK and elsewhere."

Mr Griffin claimed that the company had no plans to merge the two businesses, but added: "We will take advantage of the possible operational synergies where available and we will be looking at joint marketing initiatives." Mike Jones, Capel-Cure Myers chief executive, said: "We are very excited at the potential of this deal in terms of opportunities it offers."

Limit shares advance

SHARES in Limit, the Lloyd's of London investment vehicle aiming to be a mini-insurance company with a higher market valuation, rose 8p, to 146p, yesterday after interim profits of £10.2 million (£7.6 million). Michael Carpenter, chief executive, said that within three years, Limit wants to provide 80 per cent of the capacity of the Janson Green and Bankside managing agencies, which it controls, against a third now. An interim dividend of 2p (1.75p) is due January 27.

EU backs Lonrho switch

THE European Commission has approved the transfer of Anglo American's 28 per cent stake in Lonrho to JCI, the South African mining group which is in bid discussions with Lonrho. The transfer was subject to a series of conditions, which include Anglo American, the South African conglomerate, dropping its veto over certain JCI decisions. Lonrho wants to offer around £450 million for the group, more than £100 million below the price suggested by Mzi Khumalo, JCI's chairman.

Takeover bid by Dunloe

DUNLOE HOUSE, the property development and investment company based in the Irish Republic, has launched a £22.25 million takeover bid for Ewart, a rival property company. Dunloe is offering 18 new shares for every five Ewart shares, valuing each Ewart share at 70p, against yesterday's price of 67½p. There is a cash alternative worth 67p a share. Noel Smyth, Dunloe chairman, holds 26 per cent of Ewart through a private investment vehicle.

Stoves to acquire rival

STOVES GROUP has agreed to acquire New World Holdings, a rival UK manufacturer of domestic cookers in Warrington, Cheshire, from Merloni Domestic Appliances for £6.5 million. In 1996 New World earned operating profits of £56,000 after a £1.5 million charge for redundancies on turnover of £21.4 million. As part of the deal Merloni will subscribe for 800,000 new Stoves shares at 260p a share at a total cost of £2 million. Existing Stoves shares were unchanged at 259p yesterday.

Wintrust shares jump

SHARES in Wintrust, the family-run merchant banking group, leapt 40p to 400p yesterday as interim results showed pre-tax profits up from £1.67 million to £1.9 million in the six months to September 30. Richard Szpiro, chairman and managing director, said the company was still taking business from the clearing banks in key areas. Earnings per share rose 21 per cent to 13.28p. The company will pay a 4.84p (4.4p) interim dividend on March 31.

Treasury accounting methods challenged

By Robert Bruce

THE Treasury has been criticised by the Accounting Standards Board (ASB) for using the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR).

New accounting rules proposed today by the ASB could oblige the Government to revise its accounts to return many transactions deemed to be "off-balance sheet financing" back within the PSBR.

Under the PFI some £7.5 billion of assets like roads, bridges, hospitals and prisons are being constructed by private sector operators, who then use the assets built to provide services back to a public sector "purchaser". The Treasury has argued that all the Government is purchasing is a service.

Tweedie

Under FRS5, *Reporting the Substance of Transactions*, issued in 1994, companies cannot push assets off balance sheet if they bear the profits or losses of the asset. Sir David Tweedie, ASB chairman, said: "It is crucial to ensure that those transactions that give rise to liabilities for the Government are reported as such, so that Parliament is not misled over the extent of the payments that it is committed to make in the future."

Sandra Thompson, project director at the ASB, said: "The concern is that people might just add more and more risky services to justify taking the asset off-balance sheet. But in the end a hospital, for example, is still a hospital despite all the extra bells and whistles, and it is still the Government's hospital."

Car insurance rates must rise, says study

By Susan Emmett

MOTOR insurance premiums will have to rise well above the rate of inflation next year if insurance companies are to make a profit, according to a report published yesterday.

Fierce competition in the motor insurance market sparked off a loss-making period in 1996 which could last until 1999, said the study by Bacon & Woodrow, the actuaries and consultants. It warned premium rates would have to increase by 12 per cent immediately for the market to break even.

Cheap premiums forced by increasing competition within the industry have been blamed for most of the losses. Serious injury claims increased by 50 per cent in the past two years. The authors attributed the rise to a more "litigation-conscious" public, rather than an increase in the number of accidents.

Following a boom period from 1993 to 1995, it is forcast that the market will make an operating loss of 18 per cent of premiums in 1997, improving slightly in 1998 to 15 per cent. The authors predict that the down-turn could force many of the smaller players out of the market.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.56	2.38
Austria Sch	21.71	20.05
Belgium Fr	63.69	58.93
Canada $	2.471	2.283
Cyprus Cyp£	0.906	0.835
Denmark Kr	11.80	10.91
Finland Mkk	9.42	8.67
France Fr	10.3	9.54
Germany Dm	3.10	2.88
Greece Dr	489	450
Hong Kong $	13.60	12.40
Iceland	130	110
Ireland Pt	1.18	1.09
Israel Shk	6.21	5.56
Italy Lira	3057	2820
Japan Yen	227.83	210.30
Malta	0.680	0.621
Netherlds Gld	3.508	3.213
New Zealand $	2.89	2.65
Norway Kr	12.59	11.65
Portugal Esc	313.03	291.00
S Africa Rd	8.76	7.80
Spain Pta	259.79	241.00
Sweden Kr	13.69	12.59
Switzerland Fr	2.53	2.32
Turkey Lira	337038	317160
USA $	1.755	1.612

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday

Oracle chief loses $2.2bn on shares

From Oliver August
in New York

LARRY ELLISON, chief executive of Oracle, the US technology company, had $2.2 billion (£1.3 billion) wiped off his share portfolio in a single day after giving a profit warning.

Oracle shares fell 30 per cent, cutting $10 billion from its $32 billion market capitalisation. Mr Ellison, who founded the company, has a 25 per cent stake, making him one of the richest men in America.

Estimating his personal fortune at $9 billion this year, *Forbes* magazine ranked him fourth wealthiest but the share slide has pushed him back to seventh place.

Mr Ellison's loss is the biggest single day loss on record for an investor, according to the Compensation Resource Group. When shares plunged in October, Bill Gates lost $1.8 billion and funds managed by George Soros lost $2 billion.

Oracle blamed lower than expected sales and profits on problems in Asia but analysts and fund managers said it has pricing problems.

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XMAS-UK 04

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Thwarted Ritblat on the prowl

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

British Land's most recent annual report is scattered with elegant photographs of the National Gallery and its contents. There is also a photograph of John Ritblat, smiling out from a gilded frame. "The chairman in jovial frame of mind," reads the caption.

Yesterday's figures from British Land gave reasons for the chairman to be jolly. Profits are motoring and the market is moving in the rent collector's favour. He has £100 million to splash out during the financial year on bringing a series of ambitious projects to fruition.

Those with the jaundiced view that long memories tend to produce look at the banks' current enthusiasm for property lending and see a slump ahead. But Ritblat, a three dimensional incarnation of the popular image of the property developer, is one of the few members of the species that has lived through boom and bust and come out smiling.

This time round, he is confident that a scarcity of top quality space in the right places will ensure his properties will remain in favour. His ability to negotiate deals, on financing as well as sites, harks back to his past as an estate agent.

The property market is his element, but some British Land shareholders, who have been well served by the sharp-suited chairman, are muttering about whether they might do even better if he were to concentrate all his dynamism on British Land. Instead, he is chairman of Milner Group, the innocuous imprimatur bestowed on his former Conrad Ritblat estate agency business after its merger with the Speciality Shops retail property chain. Even after the merger, Ritblat has a share holding big enough to maintain his interest in Milner, which has been moving rapidly away from its estate agency roots. For instance, Milner buys pubs, so does British Land. Is it easy to decide which company gets which deal?

Then there is the private property company, Freehold Portfolio Estates, run by son Jamie. Like any generous father, Ritblat has put up cash for Jamie's venture and it would be surprising if he were not to offer ideas and advice as well.

Clearly, Ritblat believes that he can avoid any conflict of interest and the recent deals he has pulled off for British Land indicate that he has certainly been concentrating hard on the company. Partnering up with the likes of GUS and Rank take him, at relatively minor risk, into vast new areas of opportunity.

For the time being, however, it seems that he is to be deprived of the challenge he really craved. As MEPC sat on the sidelines of the recent excitements in the sector, Ritblat was keen to make a bid. But MEPC shareholders could not be persuaded to agree in advance to his overtures. He was not prepared to risk a contested fight and now it seems that James Tuckey has persuaded his investors to grant him continuing independence. If that has left Ritblat feeling frustrated, do not expect him to wait long before seeking new excitements.

At Liberty to keep the status quo

The meeting of Liberty shareholders today promises to be extraordinary in every sense. Will there be a preponderance of the pretty prints with which the store's name has become synonymous? Will the formidable Mrs Elizabeth Stewart Liberty have searched Liberty's millinery department to provide herself with a suitable hat for the occasion, with the benefit of a suitable shareholder discount? Will there be gentlemen with bushy beards in attendance, representatives of the Merchant Navy Pension Fund? And if so, just where will they sit among this largely family gathering that will be fraught with more tensions than the Forsythes.

If the Merchant Navy Pension Fund does vote its 5 per cent stake with the Stewart Liberty faction, or even abstain, then the game is up for Denis Cassidy and his team, who never did stand much of a chance after being ambushed by the ulikely combination of Brian Myerson and his one-time opponent, Mrs Stewart Liberty.

Perhaps the Navy men feel they owe Myerson a favour since it was, apparently, they who helped him amass his stake in Liberty, at a significantly higher price than today's. But, other than goodwill, it is hard to see why impartial investors should choose to vote their shares with the unlikely partnership that is set, so determinedly, on booting out the board.

Cassidy's record is not one betraying a consistent relationship with Midas, but at Boddingtons he did lead the former brewer successfully through a remarkable turnaround. Among his other ventures, there is little to boast about.

At Liberty, his strategy is by no means proven, but his heavy investment plans for the Regent Street store had, not so long ago, been given the blessing of Mrs Stewart Liberty. What Mr Myerson said to change her mind, we shall never know. But he has said precious little to persuade shareholders that they will do any better with he and Odile Griffiths on the board. There is a touch of Hans Anderson in the way that Ms Griffiths has been transformed from a minor corporate financier into the adviser to the Stewart Liberty family who is now being put up for a seat on the Liberty board.

Myerson's record is as mixed as Cassidy's and his plans for the company unexplained. Shareholders should all forget family loyalties and quarrels and stick with the board.

Details due, Mr Robinson

Phew! Middle England can relax. It seems that the maximum £50,000 tax relief on savings that Paymaster General Geoffrey Robinson so adamantly defended last week is not enshrined in government policy. Well, no more than the banning of tobacco sponsorship on motor racing, anyhow.

The message now is that the details of the new Individual Savings Account (Isa) are all up for grabs. After all, what Mr Robinson unveiled last week was merely a discussion paper. In which case, it very effectively started the debate rolling.

The level of tax relief is only one aspect of many about Isa which need to be rethought. While the Government may be wary of upsetting the 750,000 — sorry, make that 350,000 — who would feel penalised by a £50,000 limit, it also needs to consider the needs of those at the other end of the savings scale, the people who have nothing put aside and about whom the Chancellor is genuinely concerned.

The system that will attract them to save needs to be simple and convenient. But if withdrawing money is as simple and painless as putting it in, the sad fact is that the people with the smallest nest egg will be tempted the most.

If Isa is to be a success, the Paymaster General needs to listen hard to what the savings industry has to say. And his position as the man in charge of savings would be easier if he could answer the questions that remain over his own fortunate savings position.

Swift reactions

IN HIS "periodic review of Railtrack's access charges", John Swift, the rail regulator, devotes 55 pages to platitudes about giving all parties three-and-a-half years to discuss a new charging structure. Then he has a seven-page "technical appendix" in which he says that Railtrack's return on capital should be little more than 6 per cent. Consult all he may, but Swift appears already decided on one of the most vital issues.

Windfall factor helps Airtours profits to soar

By Marianne Curphey

Tim Byrne, left, David Crossland and Harry Page celebrated

AIRTOURS, the second-largest UK tour operator, celebrated its tenth year since listing on the London Stock Exchange yesterday with an almost 40 per cent jump in full-year pre-tax profits to £120.3 million (£86.8 million).

Although the figures exceeded expectations, the shares fell 32½p to £12.02. Analysts said the fall was partially because of profit-taking.

The company, whose chairman is David Crossland and chief executive Harry Page, said evidence of the "windfall effect" — a rise in consumer spending after the free shares handed out by converting building societies — was now clear. Its bookings for winter 1997-98 are 11 per cent higher than the previous year, while bookings for summer 1998 are 15 per cent ahead. Families are upgrading holidays and travelling further.

The company also used the year-end results to September to announce a board reshuffle and a proposed two-for-one capitalisation issue which will be put before shareholders at January's annual meeting. Harry Coe, deputy chief executive and finance director, has been promoted to group managing director and his deputy, Tim Byrne, is to join the board as group finance director.

Airtours' sales director and purchasing director were poached in September by Inspirations but are still with the company and Mr Coe said they were being held to their contracts for another year.

Analysts were looking for an update on the Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation into vertical integration in the travel industry. The report has been passed to the Department of Trade and Industry but Mr Coe said he did not expect a decision until at least the end of January.

The regulator is concerned that Airtours and rival Thomson may be using their size and market dominance to promote their own holidays in their own travel agency shops at the expense of other operators' packages. Mr Coe said Airtours had £400 million of capital at the year end and would "continue to expand our overseas business interests to provide a balance to our UK earnings". Rumours continue to circulate that it plans a large acquisition in North America.

Turnover was £2.2 billion (£1.7 billion) and fully diluted earnings per share were 59.04p (45.63p). The board is recommending a final dividend of 16p which gives a year total of 20p (16p).

Tempus, page 30

NFC pins hopes for growth on US

By Paul Durman

NFC, the transport group that owns the Pickfords removals firm, is looking to the US to breathe new life into its profits growth. Gerry Murphy, chief executive, said the North American logistics market is growing by about 18 per cent a year — against the 5 per cent seen in the UK market, where NFC and its Exel Logistics arm has its largest business.

Expanding business from existing US clients including Compaq, Hewlett Packard, and Exxon helped NFC to improve its North American profits by 4 per cent to £26.6 million in the year to September 30 — equivalent to a 12 per cent rise after adjusting for currency changes.

The 10 per cent improvement from the UK business to £66 million of operating profits was driven by reorganisation and disposals. Sales were unchanged at £1.06 billion, and fell by 1 per cent in the continuing businesses.

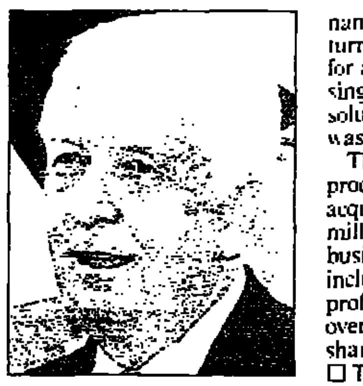
The reorganisation of the UK and continental operations has cost £49 million, contributing to a fall in pretax profits from £105.2 million to £87.8 million. However, after stripping out exceptional items, pre-tax profits show a 9 per cent rise to £115.6 million.

NFC may consider handing cash back to shareholders as it seeks to deal with its complicated balance sheet, which includes long-term debt and net cash of £53.4 million. Mr Murphy said it may deal with the problem by making acquisitions. NFC plans an unchanged dividend of 7.1p, with the 4.6p final due on March 2.

Tempus, page 30

TI pulling out of joint venture with Snecma

By Adam Jones



Lewinton: cautionary tale

AMID pressure for further European aerospace consolidation, TI Group provided a cautionary tale yesterday when it withdrew from a joint venture with Snecma of France.

TI, whose chairman is Sir Christopher Lewinton, is selling its 50 per cent stake in Messier-Dowty, which makes aircraft landing gear, to Snecma for £207.5 million. The announcement came a day after France, Germany and the UK called for closer integration of European aerospace and defence electronics businesses.

Messier-Dowty made an operating profit of £22 million on turnover of £247 million in 1996. Its 9 per cent margin is less than the industry average, one analyst said, held back by the difficulty of cutting staff in France. Martin Angle, TI finance director, said the returns were not good enough for a UK public company and single ownership was the only solution. The joint venture was set up in January 1995.

TI is likely to spend the proceeds of the sale on bolt-on acquisitions, with about £600 million available. A repair business owned by TI is included in the sale. It made a profit of £2 million on turnover of £32 million in 1996. TI shares fell from 531p to 513½p.

☐ TI was ejected from the FTSE-100 yesterday with Blue Circle and RMC, and replaced by Mercury Asset Management, British Energy and Amvescap.

Tempus, page 30

Colloids asks for support from holders

ALLIED COLLOIDS, the Bradford chemicals company contesting a £1.1 billion takeover bid, is asking its shareholders to put their faith in rising profit margins, improved manufacturing efficiencies, savings on raw materials and strong sales growth (Paul Durman writes).

In its first defence document, Allied Colloids urged its shareholders to reject the 155p a share offer from Hercules of the US. The bid fundamentally undervalued the company, Colloids said. Hercules said its target was painting a rosy picture.

The shares stayed at 167p.

British Land profits ahead 51%

By Richard Miles

RISING rents and the general economic upturn have helped to boost interim profits at British Land, the property group, by 51 per cent to £51.6 million (See Commentary, this page).

John Ritblat, chairman, said the bumper profits were the result of a decision five or six years ago to liquidate many of its investments, so allowing the company to turn over its entire property portfolio.

Since the early 1990s, British Land has bought a number of large commercial properties at the bottom of the market, specialising in City and West End of London sites, as well as in retail and leisure properties. In consequence, British Land has trebled gross assets to £5.8 billion.

Mr Ritblat said current London office rents, now exceeding £40 per sq ft, remained lower in real terms than their pre-recession levels in 1989.

However, prospects for the company were good, with further reductions in business rates next year, lower building management overheads and the general economic upturn.

Joint ventures have figured large in British Land's recent investment strategy, including a £960 million tie-up with Great Universal Stores and a £161 alliance with Rank.

Mr Ritblat said that a number of further joint ventures were under discussion, but it was too soon to give details.

British Land raised its interim dividend by 5.14 per cent to 3.07p. Shares in the company closed 5p up at 665p.

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It's what you want to know

Pizza Hut group takes £300m hit

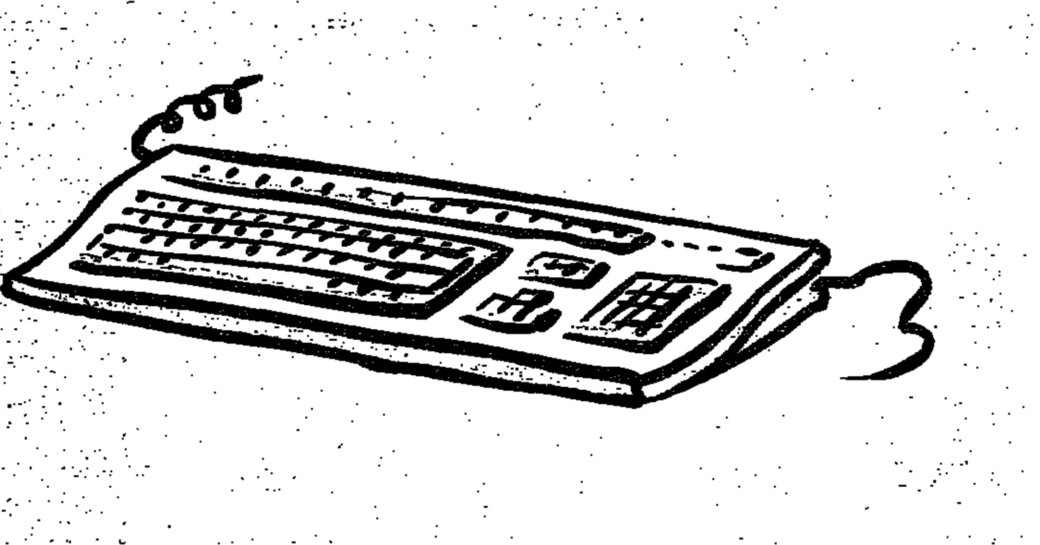
From Oliver August in New York

TRICON, the £3 billion American group that runs 360 restaurants in the UK, has taken a £300 million charge against profits two months after being spun-off by Pepsi.

Investors had not been given warning of the plan to close down or sell 1,400 Pizza Hut, KFC and Taco Bell businesses at the demerger. The group said plans for UK closures and sales had not been finalised but around 35 restaurants could be affected.

Tricon will remain the world's largest restaurant group, with 20,000 outlets, ahead of McDonald's. The restructuring plan amounts to the loss of almost 10 per cent of Tricon's fast food outlets. The group said the UK was considered a growth area but the impact of the plan may still be severe. Many of its UK restaurants are believed to be on marginal sites and in need of refurbishment. The group's main growth area is Asia. Most of the closures will occur in America, where almost 600 restaurants will close.

Andrall Pearson, the 73-year-old chief executive, said: "Our commitment to shareholders was to take decisive action to drive cash flow and execute a more focused operating strategy."



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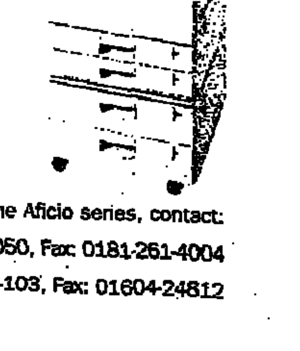

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STOCK MARKET **MICHAEL CLARK**

Stock Market Writer of the Year

GKN shares drop 46p in day of hard knocks

SHARES in GKN, Britain's biggest engineer, were sent reeling by a series of bearish stories doing the rounds in the Square Mile. The shares were left nursing a fall of 46p at £12.64, wiping £162 million from its £4.6 billion price tag.

The slide was initiated by the news that Renault, the French car maker, had turned to NNT, one of GKN's Japanese rivals, with an order for bearings. This may have given some weight to BZW's apparent decision to move GKN from a "buy" to a "hold", thereby further undermining the shares.

The tough conditions facing GKN were also underlined by news of a profits warning in the US from Tenneco. There was also talk that GKN's Westland helicopter division had lost a major contract. By the close of business three million GKN shares had changed hands.

Share prices generally closed above their worst levels of the day, having been marked sharply lower in the wake of losses overnight in the US and Far East.

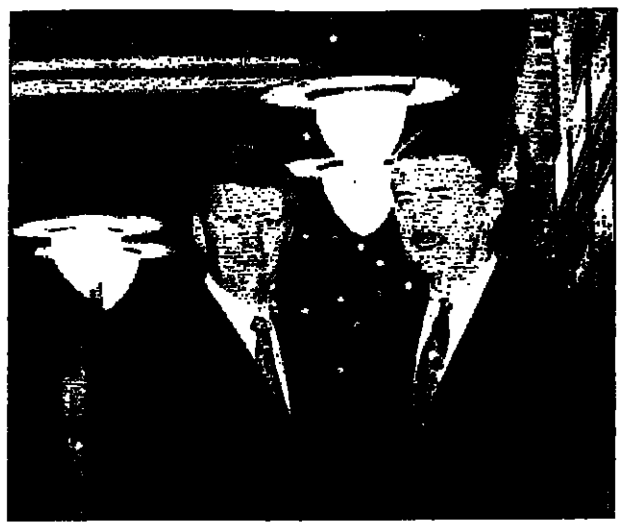
At one stage, the FTSE 100 Index was down almost 80 points, but enjoyed a late rally with the help of selective support among financials. This enabled it to shrug off an opening fall of more than 100 points on Wall Street to close 46.4 down at 5,103.7. Trading conditions were thin, with total turnover reaching only 773 million shares.

The title of worst performer among blue chips went to **Railtrack**, with the price dropping 84p to 996p, reflecting a periodic review by the industry regulator.

That overnight turmoil in Far Eastern markets took its toll on the usual clutch of companies with exposure to that region. **Inchcape** shed 16½p at 186½p with the help of a "sell" recommendation from Merrill Lynch, the broker, while there were also losses for **HSBC**, 83p to £16.20, **Standard Chartered**, 35p to 725p, and **Cable & Wireless** 6½p to 538½p.

The reason for the sharp jump in the **Christie's International** share price just 24 hours after the breakdown of bid talks became apparent yesterday, when it emerged that the original bidder had come back with fresh proposals. The Christie's share price responded with a jump of 31p to 306p, for a two-day gain of 53½p. Speculators say the bidder could be Sothebys, its biggest rival, which is itself fending off a possible predator.

Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, the **Kingfisher** boss, confirmed that trading in the run-up to the all-important Christmas period was proving difficult. This left the shares down 22½p at 828½p. The British Retail Consortium said this week sales growth has been slowing to its lowest since April last year. Kingfisher's Comet subsidiary is continuing to increase market share, which must be bad news for **Dixons**, its biggest rival, down 17p at 618½p after touching 606p. Other retailers affected included **Argos**, down 20p at 596½p, **Marks & Spencer**, 4p lower at 620p. **Boots**, 26p cheaper at 570p, and **Next**, 14p off at 695p.



Better news from Roger Young, left, and John Gray, finance director, of Scottish Hydro-Electric, added 4½p to the shares

HP Bulmer rounded off a dismal time of late for Britain's cidermakers by reporting lower profits and tough trading conditions. The shares fell 15p to 392½p. The news came just 24 hours after rival **Matthew Clark** saw its shares slump to a new low after issuing a profits warning. The price receded a further 1p to 182½p.

England and Wales have become growth markets for **Scottish Hydro-Electric**, one of Scotland's two power generators, where Roger Young is chief executive. The shares were 4½p better at 494p on hearing interim results. The group has moved south in order to counter lower earnings in Scotland.

It was the first day of dealings on AIM for **Razorback Vehicles**, an Australian company specialising in the conversion of Volkswagen transporters. The shares failed to make much headway, ending the session at 102½p.

Aston Villa's two-goal victory over Steaua Bucharest not only took it through to the next round of the UEFA Cup, but also lifted its share price 20p to 707½p.

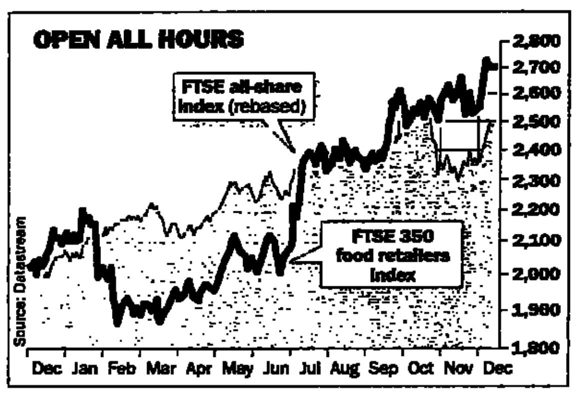
☐ **GILT-EDGED:** A late rally enabled bond prices to claw back early falls to close near their best levels, with small gains on the day. Sentiment had been dented early on by publication of the minutes for the last meeting of the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee. It showed that the decision to raise rates in November was voted on unanimously. This and the latest auction brought gloom to the shorter end of the market.

The issue of £2 billion Treasury 6.5 per cent 2003 was just 1.77 times subscribed, slightly below most expectations.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt was £3/16 better at £120 9/16 as 59,000 contrcts were completed.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 finished £3/8 better at £120 9/16, while in shorts Treasury 7½ per cent 2002 shed £1/16 at £101 7/32.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Share losses deepened as JP Morgan slid after saying its fourth-quarter revenues were lower because of unsettled markets. The Dow Jones industrial average was 73.10 points down at 7,976.56.



Source: Datastream

CREDIT Lyonnais Laing, the broker, has suddenly turned bearish of the food retailers and claims the sector is fast running out of steam. Its "safe haven" status also appears to be a thing of the past. It is not robust enough to trade at current levels for a prolonged period.

J Sainsbury, down 7p at 510p, and Tesco, 1½p lighter at 504½p, have both gone on the "sell" list with Laing urging clients to start taking profits. Analyst Paul Smiddy reckons that Asda, steady at 174½p, and Safeway, 17p stronger at 355p, represent the best value for money and he does not rule out the possibility of Asda making a bid for Safeway before too long.

Moves by Tesco to provide extra customer service while staying open longer hours will eventually impact on gross margins.

Instead he looks to the second liners with "buy" recommendations in Iceland, 2p better at 130p, Somerfield, 1p dearer at 201½p, Watson & Philip, 6p cheaper at 456½p, and Thorntons, unchanged at 240p.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones .... 7976.56 (-73.10)
S&P Composite .... 967.50 (-8.28)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average .... 16478.12 (-208.39)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng .... 11022.41 (-468.25)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index .... 910.30 (-13.70)

Sydney:
AO .... 2554.7 (-28.1)

Frankfurt:
DAX .... 4117.27 (-67.64)

Singapore:
Straits .... 1703.52 (-30.70)

Brussels:
General .... 14107.05 (-68.44)

Paris:
CAC-40 .... 2932.18 (-27.22)

Zurich:
SKA Gen .... 1231.00 (-12.10)

London:
FT 30 .... 3267.4 (-24.5)
FTSE 100 .... 5130.7 (-46.4)
FTSE 250 .... 4769.3 (-12.3)
FTSE 350 .... 2466.0 (-19.3)
FTSE Eurotrack 100 .... 2680.19 (-8.70)
FTSE All-Share .... 2407.16 (-17.66)
FTSE Non Financials .... 2419.13 (-13.80)
FTSE Fixed Interest .... 133.20 (+0.22)
FTSE Govt Secs .... 100.98 (+0.18)
Bargains 46720
SEAQ Volume 773.0m
US$ .... 1.6514 (+0.0055)
German Mark .... 2.9441 (-0.0088)
Exchange Index .... 103.9 (-0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)
£:ECU 1.4872
£:SDR 1.2199
RPI .... 159.6 Nov (3.7%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX .... 158.0 Nov (2.8%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Advance UK Tst	102	+ ½
BG 'B'	30½	...
Boustead	20½	...
Bovis Homes	195	- 4
CRC	131½	- 3
Capital Opps Tst	113½	...
Comland Comm	65	- 3
Cresco Intl	153½	...
Flmg Geared Uts	177	...
Foresight Tech Wts	25	...
Foresight Tech	85	...
Manchester & Lon	270	...
Market Link Publ	55	...
Metalsrussia	74½	...
Minorplanet Sys	57½	...
Northern Recrtmnt	140	- 3½
Nottingham Frst (70)	54	...
Range Cooker Cmpy	6½	...
Rapid Technology	93½	...
Razorback Vehicles	102½	...
Savoy Asset Mngmt	113½	...
ScS Upholstery	113½	...
Seascope Shipping	253	...
Second Scot Zr Dv	100½	...
Second Scottish	100½	...
Tetra	175½	+ ½
Vanguard Med Wts	42½	- 1

RIGHTS ISSUES

FI Group n/p (640)	195	...
Green Prop n/p (350)	40	+ 4

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:
Christies Intl .... 306p (+31p)
Safeway .... 355p (+17p)
Photobition .... 857½p (+40p)
Delphi .... 695p (+26½p)
ICI .... 928p (+23p)
Provident .... 789½p (+14p)

FALLS:
Railtrack .... 996p (-84p)
Hutch Whamp .... 392p (-27p)
Jardine Math .... 289¼p (-16p)
Sappi .... 318p (-16¼p)
Stand Chart .... 725p (-35p)
Reuters .... 665p (-30p)
Select App .... 635p (-25p)
Danka Bs Sys .... 566½p (-22p)

Closing Prices Page 35

TEMPUS

A solution for winter

THE key to making money as a tour operator is to reduce the number of holidays sold at discounted rates at the end of the summer, and to find strong winter sales to offset cashflow problems at the year end. A simple concept, but the execution is notoriously difficult. Holiday company earnings are often volatile, and the less well-managed operators suffer from losses in the off-peak season.

Airtours' record results yesterday demonstrated that the company has got to grips with both problems. Expansion into Scandinavia and North America guarantees earnings in the winter months when companies selling purely to the UK market traditionally make losses.

Keeping a tight rein on capacity for next year means that Airtours stands a good chance of increasing the number of holidays sold at brochure prices. The industry as a whole seems to have learnt from its past mistakes. In a high-volume, low-margin business such as tour operating, chasing market share only leads to lower prices overall.

The shares would be a strong buy if it were not for the MMC report, which is hanging over Airtours and Thomson, the market leader. Analysts believe that the DTI will force both companies to clarify the relationship between their operating arms and high street travel agencies. A worst case scenario would involve both being forced to sell their agency shops. The market would be happy enough to see Airtours spend its spare cash on a North American acquisition, but less comfortable with a rights issue to fund it. Fair value for investors willing to sit out a few months of turbulence.

NFC

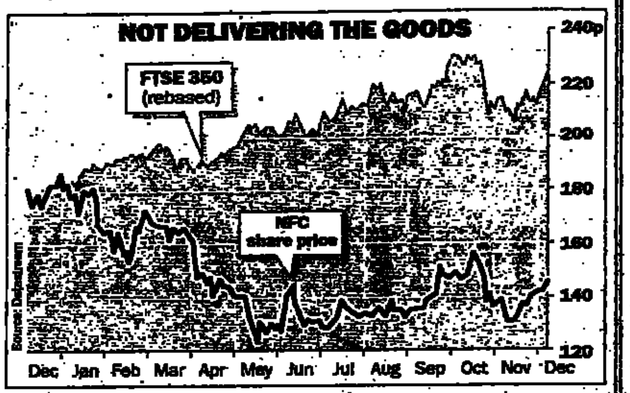
SHAREHOLDERS in NFC have had to endure a miserable few years but the company may be beginning to turn the corner. It is probably unwise to say so, but even its restructuring seems to have come to an end.

While the main problem businesses have either gone or been sorted out, it must find a way to grow. More than 40 per cent of the group's £2.4 billion of sales are in the mature UK market, where the emphasis is on improving profits by concentrating on the better businesses rather than increasing overall sales.

NFC has been investing in Asia Pacific, but the fruits of this will be delayed by the turmoil in the region. Europe, which made £7.8 million on £322.4 million of sales, looks to be riddled with problems that only begin with the striking French lorry drivers.

Hence the enthusiasm for North America where the strong economy and the increasing willingness to outsource logistics management give NFC real cause for optimism. However, working for the computer and electronics industries does give it exposure to any slowdown stemming from Asia.

On most reckonings, the group is heading for profits of £130 million this year, or about 11.5p of earnings. With the shares at 145p, the multiple works out at less than 13 times. That looks reasonable, particularly with possible support to come from a share buyback.



Source: Datastream

TI Group

LIKE Leonard Bast, the poor and decent chap who slips further and further away from respectable society in E.M. Forster's *Howards End*, TI Group was aware that it was peering over the edge of the abyss.

The company's market value has taken a hammering recently, and it discovered last night that it has been ejected from the FTSE 100 index — albeit only as a temporary measure until Mercury Asset Management becomes part of Merrill Lynch.

The TI share price reached an all-time high of more than 690p in the autumn before slumping to 456½p. The recent rally came to an abrupt end yesterday as TI sold its stake in Messier-Dowty, which really should have been a corking business but foundered amid the perception that the French were reluctant to cut costs.

The fall in the share price since the autumn is partly because of the strong pound. TI has been bracketed with exporting engineers — unfairly, it contends. But the fall also reflects unsatisfactory margins at Messier-Dowty and anxiety about trading at John Crane, the seals arm. TI admits that John Crane volume has dropped as the market softened by about 5 per cent but says growth is still possible. Hold the shares while the dust clears.

ICS

TREVOR WHEATLEY is a savvy industrialist; he also has an eye for a bargain. Having made a fortune for himself and fellow shareholders at Control Techniques he hopes to repeat the formula at Industrial Control Services, which has fallen on hard times.

Earlier this year ICS shares traded at 146p. Yesterday Wheatley and blue-chip investors led by HSBC Investment Bank bought into the company at 30p. True, ICS accompanied the placing and open offer with interim losses of £27 million. But this is a company with sales of almost £100 million a year and which has already promised to return to profit in the second half.

Wheatley understands the products and the market. Geoff Withrington, the new chief executive, has a proven track record at Eurotherm and Fisons Instruments. In the short term costs are being cut and new financial controls put in place. Longer term, Wheatley is confident the market for ICS's advanced controls and instrumentation will be robust.

Armed with the promise of lucrative share options if the company grows earnings by 20 per cent a year over the next three years, and with adequate working capital secured via the placing and open offer, the duo are worth a bet.

EDITED BY PAUL DURMAN

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Dec	1054-1053	Mar	1167-1166
Mar	1082-1081	May	1185-1175
May	1100-1099	Jul	1194-1190
Jul	1118-1115	Sep	1220-1210
Sep	1136-1135		
Dec	1149-1148		Volume: 4017

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

Jan	1842-1840	Sep	1800 BID
Mar	1833-1830	Nov	unq
May	unq	Jan	..
Jul	1795 SLR		Volume: 11686

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Oct	309.8-09.2
Spot: 300.0		Dec	312.8-09.0
Mar	308.5-08.2	Mar	315.3-10.1
May	313.9-13.3	May	314.9-13.1
Aug	315.8-15.2		Volume: 2001

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on December 9

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	65.19	94.84	96.45
(+/-)	+5.12	+3.33	+6.60
Eng/Wales:	65.04	95.36	93.97
(+/-)	+4.98	+2.76	+4.85
(%)	+7.0	+15.0	+10.0
Scotland:	66.80	92.09	104.37
(+/-)	+6.55	+5.14	+11.80
(%)	+94.0	-8.0	+29.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	17.00	-0.55
Brent 15 day (Jan)	17.50	-0.55
Brent 15 day (Feb)	17.65	-0.50
W Texas Intermediate (Jan)	18.10	-0.60
W Texas Intermediate (Feb)	18.40	-0.55

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	186 (-2)	189 (-2)
Gasoil EEC	162 (-5)	164 (-5)
3.5 Fuel Oil	86 (-3)	88 (-3)
Naphtha	177 (-1)	179 (-2)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Dec	158.00-58.25	Mar	161.00-61.25
Jan	159.50-59.75	Apr	161.50-61.75
Feb	161.00 SLR		Vol: 34321

BRENT (6.00pm)

Jan	17.45-17.47	Apr	17.73 SLR
Feb	17.59-17.61	May	17.80 SLR
Mar	17.62-17.64		Vol: 44088

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Jan	82.10	Jan	75.40
Mar	84.25	Mar	78.05
May	86.25	May	79.10
Jul	88.25	Sep	79.75
Sep	82.10	Nov	81.75
Volume: 200		Volume: 12	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Mar	unq	87.0
Apr	109.0	109.5
May	unq	119.5
		Volume: 63

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)
Jan 47.00-47.50

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Dec 97	1285	1275	1285
Jan 98	1310	1295	1300
Feb 98	1295	1285	1290
Apr 98	1360	1355	1356
Vol: 147 lots		Open Interest: 1604	

Index 1251 +30

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1779.0-1780.0	1808.5-1809.0	1193875
Lead ($/tonne)	512.50-513.50	529.00-530.00	205100
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1104.0-1105.0	1131.0-1132.0	18893
Tin ($/tonne)	5440.0-5450.0	5360.0-5355.0	27455
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1554.0-1555.0	1575.0-1575.5	2106825
Nickel ($/tonne)	5955.0-5960.0	6055.0-6060.0	104406

LIFFE OPTIONS

	Series	Calls Jan	Apr	Jul	Puts Jan	Apr	Jul
ASDA	160	13	23	27½	2½	5	7
(*174½)	180	7½	12	16½	10½	13½	15½
Abbey Natl	1000	55½	89	115½	43½	76½	93
(*1033½)	1050	34	67	92½	73	105½	120
[illegible]	750	51	71	87½	14	28½	38½
(*772)	800	23	45½	61	38½	52½	62
[illegible]	500	45	63½	72½	6½	18	23½
(*534½)	550	16½	32½	49½	27	40½	46½
BAA	460	47½	64	74½	5½	14½	21½
(*497½)	500	21½	40½	52	19½	30½	39
BAT Inds	500	51½	67½	78	11	29	35
(*532)	550	24	42	53	32½	54½	60
Barclays	1600	123½	177	229½	53½	94	122½
(*1654½)	1700	69	127	180½	100½	143½	172
Bass	900	50	69	73	35½	55	67½
(*937)	950	19	39½	52	69	84½	91
Boots	850	49	80	97½	22½	38½	50
(*870)	900	25½	55	71	49	65	74½
Br Airways	550	35	57	69	18	32	39½
(*580)	600	14	35	47	47½	59½	65½
BP	800	62½	89½	109	17½	35½	43
(*845)	850	34	54½	34	37	58	72
Br Steel	130	13	18½	22½	3	6	10½
(*139)	140	7	13	17½	7	10½	15
C&W	500	47½	66½	73	10½	25	32½
(*532)	550	21	41	53½	30½	46	56
[illegible]	550	70½	93½	110	34½	63	69
(*577)	600	45½	74	85	59½	93½	94
[illegible]	1400	51½	126½	164½	50	58	111
(*1423½)	1450	57	99	139½	72½	112	135½
HSBC	1600	118	192½	244½	106	170	193½
(*1656½)	1700	74	147½	196½	157½	225½	247
[illegible]	700	43	65½	81½	9	39½	31½
[illegible]	750	19	38	55½	30½	57	55½
[illegible]	900	54½	79	103½	24½	50	66
(*934)	950	29	54½	78½	43	76½	91½
Land Sec	950	75½	96½	104	14½	28½	37
(*975)	1000	47	66	74	34	48½	58
M&S	500	33	57½	70	16	24	35
[illegible]	550	15½	34	45½	41	46	57½
Nat Pwr	550	50½	74	83	10½	22½	30
(*583½)	600	36	48	56½	29½	46	57½
Nat West	960	87	112½	135½	31	63½	65
(*998)	1000	62	97	111	52½	88½	89½
Reuters	650	36	54½	71½	19	37	43
(*662)	700	14½	32	48½	46½	64½	72
Ry SunAll	600	37	53	69	29½	44½	52½
(*617)	650	16	32	47	52	73½	80
Safeway	330	27½	41½	45	3½	15½	19½
(*349½)	360	12½	28½	30	22½	27½	32½
Sainsbury	500	28	45	56	14½	22	31½
(*510½)	550	8½	22½	32	45	51	51
Shell	420	24	—	—	13	—	—
(*429½)	450	16	—	—	21	—	—
Smkl Bch	600	42	65½	26	19½	38	46
(*627½)	625	23½	53	—	31	50½	—
Std Char	700	55½	75½	104½	34	55½	66
(*725)	750	31	48½	93½	59½	80½	91½
Thames W	550	35	54	81½	32½	45½	59
(*558)	1000	14½	42½	58½	62	72½	87½
Vodafone	390	39	55	66½	13½	23½	30
(*413½)	420	23	33½	52½	27	38½	45
Woolwich	300	21½	29½	34½	5	12	16
(*313)	330	7½	15½	20½	20½	28	31½
Zeneca	1900	122	180½	234	47	99½	105½
(*1965)	2000	69	129½	183	91	141	152½

	Series	Calls Feb	May	Aug	Puts Feb	May	Aug
BTR	180	15½	21½	25½	12	19½	20½
(*181)	200	8	14	18½	24	32	33
Blue Circ	330	38½	44½	50	7	12	21
(*324½)	330	19½	28	35	19½	25½	35½
Br Aero	1700	125½	177½	222	66½	96½	120
(*1740½)	1800	78	126½	171½	119	145½	163
Br Telcm	465	27½	—	—	18½	—	—
(*475½)	515	3	—	—	50	—	—
Cadbury	600	49	63½	72½	13	28½	32½
(*628½)	650	21½	38½	47½	37½	53½	57
Energy Gp	600	44	59	65½	8½	15	15
(*623)	650	22	31½	36	26½	33½	35½
Gallaher	330	22½	28½	34½	17	24½	26½
(*334)	360	9½	15	22	34½	42½	44½
GEC	390	29	41	51	11	17½	26½
(*405)	420	15	25	35	26	32½	42

	Series	Calls Feb	May	—	Puts Feb	May	—
Grnd Met	550	56½	65	—	17½	24½	—
(*585½)	600	25½	39½	—	34½	49	—

	Series	Calls Feb	May	Aug	Puts Feb	May	Aug
Guinness	550	53½	67½	75½	14	23½	26
(*586)	600	26	41	46½	37½	47½	49½
Hanson	280	30	28½	32	10	17	19½
[illegible]	300	11	19½	22½	20½	38	30½
Imp Tob	360	36	47½	51	5	11½	16
[illegible]	390	17½	30	34½	16	23½	29
Kingfshr	800	59	87	102½	26½	48	51½
(*830)	850	43	61½	77	49½	71½	75½
Lasmo	260	25	34	38	7	12	13½
(*275)	280	14	24½	29	15	21	22½
Ladbroke	260	25	34	40½	7	13½	16
(*275)	280	14	24	30½	15½	33	25½
LucasVar	180	19½	27	29	6½	11	13
(*191)	200	9½	17	19½	14½	20½	20
P&O	650	41	55½	63½	22	33	44
(*662½)	700	19½	31½	41	50	61	72
Prudentl	700	60½	83½	97	31½	51	59
(*722)	750	37	55	72½	57½	78	84½
Rio Tinto	750	65	79½	94½	26	49½	58½
(*781½)	800	39½	55½	70	50	75½	84
Redland	330	15½	16½	16	½	0½	½
(*345½)	360	—	—	½	16½	16½	16½
R-Royce	240	17½	24½	31	13	17½	19
(*244)	260	9	15½	22	24	28	30
Tesco	500	31½	43½	55½	19	32	38
(*505½)	550	11½	22	34	50	60	66½
Utd Bisc	200	20	23	26½	5	10	12
(*213½)	220	8½	12	16½	12½	20	22½

	Series	Calls Dec	Mar	Jun	Puts Dec	Mar	Jun
BG PLC	280	6½	25½	30	4½	18	20
(*285½)	300	1½	15½	20	21	27½	32½
BSkyB	420	25½	48	62½	2	23	31
(*442)	460	4½	29	43	20½	44½	51
Br Bio	100	6½	18½	24½	3½	13	17
(*104)	110	2	14½	20½	9	18	21½
Centrica	90	4½	11½	14½	2	7	9½
(*93)	100	½	7½	11	8	12½	15
Dixons	600	23½	57	74½	4½	28½	39½
(*617½)	650	2½	34	50½	34	54½	64
EMI	460	16½	45½	62	4½	30	38½
(*462½)	492	3½	31½	—	24	47½	—
Granada	850	17	53½	71½	8½	39	47½
(*858)	900	1½	32	48	42½	65½	75½
GUS	700	37	68	85½	2½	26	32
(*733½)	750	8½	42½	59½	23½	49	57
Lloyds TSB	750	23½	64½	86	11	47½	57
(*762)	800	5	42	62½	42	75	84
Lonrho	90	8	13½	16	½	5½	8
(*97)	100	2	8½	11½	4½	11	13
Norwich	360	22	38	45	1½	15	19
(*379½)	390	4½	23½	29½	14	28½	33½
Orange	240	18	30	36	½	9½	12½
(*257)	260	4	18½	25	6½	18	22
Railtrack	950	52	105½	120	10	43	57½
(*994)	1000	21	81	104½	27	65	78½
Scot Pwr	500	12½	39½	57½	8½	25½	36½
(*509½)	550	—	22	36½	41	55½	65½
Tarmac	110	6	11½	14	1	4½	7
(*115)	120	1	6½	9	6	9½	12
Tomkins	280	17	26	34½	½	9½	13
(*296)	300	3½	15½	23½	6½	18	22
Unilever	475	35	46½	55	1½	14½	23
(*499)	500	8½	32	41½	9	25	35

December 10 Total: 28217 Calls: 15335 Puts: 12882

FTSE INDEX (*5127½)

Strike	Calls Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jun	Puts Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jun
5000	171½	243	312	347½	457	29	82½	120	164½	225
5050	133	206½	279½	315	—	40½	96½	138	183	—
5100	96	175	248	283	394½	57	116	157½	201½	261½
5150	66½	143½	215½	251½	—	79	137	177½	221	—
5200	44	114½	183	226	332	109½	161½	200	241½	301½
5250	27	91½	157½	198	—	145½	190½	229	268½	—
5300	15	69½	133	173	283	187	221½	258½	295	354

December 10 Total: 2161 Calls: 1466 Puts: 695 *Underlying security price

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Dec 97	119-25	119-31	119-21	119-31	2304
Previous open interest 197999	Mar 98	120-15	120-20	120-04	120-18	59006
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 98	103.72	103.82	103.58	103.76	103687
Previous open interest 263669	Jun 98	103.12	103.12	103.12	103.12	100
German Govt Bond (Bobl)	Mar 98	103.46	103.48	103.36	103.46	4655
Previous open interest 8394	Jun 98				102.88	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 98	114.70	114.73	114.45	114.67	28056
Previous open interest 115777	Jun 98				114.14	0
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 98	129.82	129.84	129.70	129.76	1226
	Jun 98				129.150	
Three Mth Sterling	Dec 97	92.30	92.31	92.29	92.29	5329
	Mar 98	92.30	92.31	92.28	92.29	14065
Previous open interest 804293	Jun 98	92.42	92.42	92.38	92.40	14038
Three Mth Euromark	Dec 97	96.23	96.23	96.22	96.23	17743
Previous open interest 1954145	Mar 98	96.08	96.09	96.06	96.08	37128
Three Mth Eurolira	Dec 97	93.92	93.92	93.87	93.88	19894
Previous open interest 601936	Mar 98	94.72	94.72	94.65	94.69	20729
Three Mth Euroswiss	Dec 97	98.13	98.22	98.13	98.22	3588
Previous open interest 164135	Mar 98	98.03	98.13	98.03	98.13	8820
Three Mth ECU	Dec 97	95.47	95.48	95.46	95.47	502
Previous open interest 39548	Mar 98	95.40	95.40	95.39	95.40	235
FTSE 100	Dec 97	5155.0	5165.0	5100.0	5140.0	12428
Previous open interest 69087	Mar 98	5208.0	5212.0	5160.0	5190.0	4657

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 7¼ Finance Hse 7½
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 7½ Low 6½ Week fixed: 7⅜
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 7 ; 3 mth 7 . Sell: 2 mth 6¾ ; 3 mth: 6¾ .

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open 7¼ close 7 .					
Local Authority Deps:	7¼	n/a	7¼	7½	7¾
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	5.85	n/a	5.82	5.94	5.98
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Deutschemark:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	4-3
French Franc:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Swiss Franc:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $285.50-285.580 Close: $283.70-284.20 High: $287.60-288.10
Low: $282.70-283.00 AM: $285.05 PM: $286.30

Krugerrand: $286.00-288.00 (£177.00-179.00)

Platinum: $375.75 (£228.10) Silver: $5.74 (£3.475) Palladium: $207.75 (£126.10)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for Dec 10	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.3107-3.3300	3.3162-3.3197	1¼-1pr	3¼-3pr
Brussels	60.580-60.980	60.707-60.810	23-18pr	62-55pr
Copenhagen	11.182-11.257	11.210-11.220	¾-¼pr	1¼-¾pr
Dublin	1.1328-1.1395	1.1361-1.1384	16-10pr	48-42pr
Frankfurt	2.9363-2.9550	2.9431-2.9460	¾-½pr	2¼-2⅛pr
Lisbon	299.86-301.50	300.51-300.86	¼-½pr	2-1½pr
Madrid	248.05-249.58	248.64-248.85	58-47pr	177-158pr
Milan	2874.2-2891.9	2880.1-2883.5	38-22pr	116-94pr
Montreal	2.3431-2.3515	2.3487-2.3515	0.72-0.66pr	1.41-1.32pr
New York	1.6479-1.6620	1.6510-1.6520	0.223-0.202pr	0.698-0.667pr
Oslo	11.921-11.989	11.964-11.979	¼-¼pr	1½-1pr
Paris	9.8310-9.8940	9.8523-9.8600	3¼-3⅛pr	9¾-9½pr
Stockholm	12.819-12.906	12.877-12.893	¼-¼pr	¼-¼pr
Tokyo	211.37-213.61	212.97-213.19	1¼-1⅛pr	3¾-3½pr
Vienna	20.656-20.806	20.708-20.730	¾-¼pr	2-1½pr
Zurich	2.3804-2.4020	2.3819-2.3850	1¼-1⅛pr	3½-3⅜pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr. Discount = ds.

[illegible]

Australia	1.4887-1.4909
Austria	12.54-12.55
Belgium (Com)	36.77-36.82
Canada	1.4230-1.4235
Denmark	6.7940-6.7960
France	5.9718-5.9727
Germany	1.7840-1.7843
Hong Kong	7.7435-7.7445
Ireland	1.5444-1.3564
Italy	1745.30-1746.80
Japan	128.95-129.00
Malaysia	3.6555-3.6650
Netherlands	2.0100-2.0110
Norway	7.2524-7.2574
Portugal	182.10-182.15
Singapore	1.6182-1.6192
Spain	150.65-150.70
Sweden	7.7973-7.8050
Switzerland	1.4450-1.4470

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6502-1.6529
Australia dollar	2.4551-2.4585
Bahrain dinar	0.6149-0.6280
Brazil real*	1.8323-1.8368
China yuan	13.493-13.793
Cyprus pound	0.8510-0.8700
Finland markka	8.8500-8.9910
Greece drachma	458.75-469.25
Hong Kong dollar	12.7566-12.7660
India rupee	63.69-64.99
Indonesia rupiah	n/a
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4970-0.5080
Malaysia ringgit	6.0221-6.0414
New Zealand dollar	2.7327-2.7367
Pakistan rupee	70.59 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.9275-6.0625
Singapore dollar	2.6657-2.6689
S Africa rand (com)	7.9600-8.1290
U A E dirham	5.9800-6.1160

Barclays Treasury • Lloyds Bank

[illegible]

3i	999	Legal & Gn	1,800
ASDA Gp	8,300	Lloyds TSB	5,800
Abbey Nat	1,200	LucasVarity	2,800
Allnce & Leic	1,400	Marks Spr	5,700
Allied Dom	2,900	NatWst Bk	2,400
AB Foods	1,100	Nat Grid	2,300
BAA	2,500	Nat Power	1,300
BAT Inds	6,100	Next	3,100
BG	5,800	Norwich Un	2,600
BOC	1,600	Orange	1,000
BP	9,100	P & O	1,800
BSkyB	2,400	Pearson	284
BTR	22,700	PowerGen	2,000
BT	7,100	Prudential	2,300
Bk of Scot	1,400	RMC	283
Barclays	2,800	Railtrack	4,400
Bass	1,900	Rank Group	1,900
Billiton	4,400	Reckitt Col	662
Blue Circle	2,500	Reed Intl	1,700
Boots	1,800	Rentokil	4,900
BAe	1,900	Reuters	4,200
BA	4,400	Rio Tinto	1,500
British Land	1,300	Rolls Royce	2,800
Brit Steel	5,600	Royal & Sun	5,800
Cable Wire	5,200	Royal Bk Scr	2,200
Cadbury	1,600	Safeway	12,700
Carlton Cms	1,900	Sainsbury	2,500
Centrica	11,500	Schroders	149
Cm Union	1,700	Scot & New	1,100
Dixons	2,900	Scot Power	1,500
EMI	754	Svrn Trent	832
Energy Gp	2,100	Shell Trans	24,600
Enterpr Oil	1,800	Siebe	1,200
GKN	3,000	SmKl Bch	7,400
GRE	746	Smiths Inds	1,000
GUS	1,900	Std Chartd	2,000
Gen Acc	203	Sun Life	1,300
Gen Elec	3,700	TI Gp	1,300
Glaxo Well	6,000	Tesco	2,700
Granada	3,300	Thames W	757
Grand Met	5,900	Tomkins	3,500
Guinness	4,900	Unilever	6,700
HSBC	3,600	Utd Utilities	2,600
Halifax	4,600	Utd News	1,300
Hays	509	Vodafone	6,700
ICI	2,300	Whitbread	297
Kingfisher	2,300	Williams	2,600
LASMO	1,200	Wolseley	1,800
Ladbroke	7,300	Woolwich	1,800
Land Secs	884	Zeneca	2,900

[illegible]

	Dec 10 midday	Dec 9 close
AMP Inc	43¼	43⅝
AMR Corp	129⅝	131¼
AT & T	58¾	58⅞
Abbott Labs	67¼	68⅝
Advanced Micro	19⅞	20⅝
Aetna Life	78½	79¼
Ahmanson (HF)	64⅝	63⅝
Air Prod & Chem	78¼	77½
AirTouch Comm	40⅞	40⅞
Albertson's	44¼	43⅞
Alcan Alumnm	28⅝	28⅞
Allied Signal	37¾	38⅝
Alum Co of Am	71⅝	71½
Amerada Hess	53⅛	53⅝
AEP	49⅝	49⅝
Amer Express	87⅝	87⅞
Amer Genl Corp	53⅞	53¾
Amer Home Pr	75¼	75⅝
Amer Intl	104¼	109⅝
Amer Stores	20¼	20¼
Amer Standard	39½	40
Ameritech	78¼	79½
Amgen	52¾	52⅞
Amoco	86⅞	86⅝
Andrew Corp	23¾	23¼
Anheuser-Busch	42⅝	42⅝
Apple Computer	14⅞	15¼
Archer Daniels	20¾	20⅞
Armco	5¼	5½
Armstrng Wrld	72⅝	71½
Asarco	24¼	24¼
Atl Richfield	78¼	77⅝
Atmel Corp	20¾	20¼
Auto Data Pro	59⅝	56¼
Avery Dennison	42⅛	42⅝
Avon Products	62¾	60¼
Baker Hughes	44⅝	44⅝
Baltim Gas & El	30¼	30½
Banc One	56½	57½
BankAmerica	80⅝	80⅝
Bank of NY	56	56¼
Bankers Tr NY	129¾	129¾
Barnett Banks	73¼	73⅝
Bausch & Lomb	39½	39¼
Baxter Intl	51	50⅝
Becton Dicknsn	52⅝	52⅝
Bell Atlantic	89¼	89¼
BellSouth	54¼	55⅝
Black & Decker	38⅛	39⅝
Block (H&R)	42⅝	43¼
Boeing	50¾	50⅝
Boise Cascade	29⅝	30⅛
Boston Scien	43¾	44¼
Bristol Myrs Sq	95¼	95⅝
Browning Ferris	35⅝	35⅝
Brunswick	29⅝	30⅛
Burlington Nthn	95	94¼
CMS Energy Corp	38⅝	38⅝
CPC Intl	105¾	106¼
CSX	53¾	53⅞
CBS Corp	30⅝	30⅝
Campbell Soup	58¾	58⅝
Carolina Pwr	37¾	37⅝
Case Corp	62⅝	62⅞
Caterpillar	49½	50⅝
Central & SW	25¼	25½
Champion Intl	48⅝	49⅝
Chase Manhat	114	115¼
Chevron Corp	78¾	78¾
Chrysler	35¼	35⅝
Chubb Corp	76¾	77⅝
Cigna Corp	170⅝	178¼
Citicorp	133½	137½
Clorox	78⅞	79½
Coastal Corp	59⅝	60¼
Coca Cola	65½	65⅝
Coca Cola Ent	37¼	37⅝
Colgate-Palm	70⅝	70⅝
Columbia Gas	75½	75¼
ColumbiaHCA	30⅝	30¾
Compaq Comp	59¼	63¼
Comp Ass Intl	52¾	52
Conagra	36⅝	36¼
Cons Edison	37⅝	37½
Cons Nat Gas	60⅝	59⅝
Cooper Inds	50¾	50⅝
Corestates	79⅛	80
Corning Inc	39⅝	42½
C'wide Credit	40¼	41¼
Crestar Finl	54⅝	55⅝
Crown Cork	49¾	49¾
Dana Corp	47⅝	48¼
Dayton Hudson	70⅝	71¼
Deere	56½	58⅝
Delta Air Lines	120⅝	120
Deluxe Corp	36⅝	36¾
Digital Equip	39⅝	42
Dillard Dept St	35⅝	35⅝
Disney (Walt)	93⅝	94⅝
Dominion Res	39	39¼
Donelley (RR)	35⅝	35¾
Dover Corp	69½	69¾
Dow Chemical	99⅝	100
Dow Jones	52¼	53¾
Dresser	42¼	42¼
Duke Power	51½	51⅞
Dun & Bradstreet	29¼	29⅝
Du Pont	63⅞	64⅝
Eastman Chem	59¾	59
Eastman Kodak	58⅞	58⅝

	Dec 10 midday	Dec 9 close
Eaton Corp	93⅞	94⅝
Edison Intl	26¾	27½
Elect Data Sys	39¾	40
Emerson Elec	56¼	56¾
Engelhard Corp	19⅝	19
Enron Corp	40⅝	40⅞
Entergy	26⅝	26⅝
Ethyl Corp	8⅝	8⅝
Exxon	62⅝	62¾
FMC Corp	69⅞	70¼
FPL Group	55⅝	55⅝
Federal Express	67⅝	67⅞
Fifth Third Banc	80	79⅞
Fleet Finl Grp	74¾	75⅝
Fluor Corp	35⅞	35¾
Ford Motor	46¾	46¼
Fort James	37⅝	38¼
Fortune Brands	35⅝	35⅞
Franklin Res	95½	97¼
GTE Corp	49⅝	49¾
Gannett	59	59¾
Gap Inc Del	58¾	56¾
Gateway 2000	30¾	32
Gen Dynamics	86¼	87
Gen Electric	74⅝	74¾
Gen Mills	76⅝	77¼
Gen Motors	63¾	63⅝
Gen Reinsurance	216¾	213⅞
Gen Signal	40¾	40⅞
Genuine Parts	31⅞	32⅝
Georgia Pac	85¾	86⅝
Gillette	97⅞	98
Glaxo Wellc ADR	46¼	47⅝
Goodrich (BF)	44¼	44¼
Goodyear Tire	64¾	65⅝
Great Lakes	43⅝	43⅞
Halliburton	56⅝	56⅞
Harcourt General	54⅝	53⅞
Heinz (HJ)	54⅞	55⅝
Hercules	49	49⅞
Hershey Foods	60¾	60⅝
Hewlett Packard	63¼	64⅝
Hilton Hotels	28	28⅝
Home Depot	59	59⅝
Homestake Mng	9¼	9⅝
Honeywell	64⅝	69¼
Household Intl	127½	127⅞
Houston Inds	24¾	23⅞
Humana	22⅝	23¾
ITT Corp	77¼	77¼
Ikon Office	29¼	30⅝
Illinois Tool	54⅝	55
Illinova	23¾	23¾
INCO	18¾	18⅝
Ingersoll Rand	40⅝	41⅝
Inland Steel	18¾	18⅝
Intel Corp	74⅞	75¾
IBM	107⅝	110¼
Intl Flav & Fr	50¼	50⅝
Intl Paper	43⅝	44⅝
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	65⅝	65
Kellogg	48¾	48½
Kerr-McGee	64⅞	64⅝
Kimberly-Clark	49¾	49¾
Kmart	12¾	12½
Knight-Ridder	51⅝	50⅞
Lilly (Eli)	63½	63¾
Limited Inc	25	25¼
Lincoln Nat	75⅞	76⅝
Litton	53¾	53⅞
Liz Claiborne	50¼	51¼
Lockheed Martin	97⅝	96⅝
Louisiana Pac	19⅝	19⅞
MCI Comm	44¾	44½
Manpower Inc	32⅝	33¾
Marriott Intl	72½	72⅞
Marsh & McLnn	76⅞	76⅝
Masco Corp	50½	52
May Dept St	55¾	55¾
Maytag Corp	35½	35½
McDonalds	47⅝	47¾
McGraw Hill	69⅝	69¼
Mead Corp	28¾	28½
Meditrust Corp	37⅞	37¾
Medtronic	51⅝	51⅝
Mellon Bk	61⅝	62⅝
Merck Inc	104¼	105
Mercury Fin	0⅝	0⅝
Merrill Lynch	75⅝	75⅞
Microsoft	143⅝	144⅝
Minnesota Mine	93½	94⅝
Mirage Resorts	23¾	23⅞
Mobil Corp	73¾	73¾
Monsanto	42¼	43⅞
Morgan (JP)	119¼	122½
Motorola Inc	59⅝	62¾
Mylan Labs	20⅝	21½
Natl Semi	27¾	27
Natl Service Ind	47⅝	47⅝
Navistar Intl	25⅝	26⅝
NY Times A	60¾	61½
Newmont Mng	27⅝	27
Nike B	48⅝	46⅝
NL Industries	16¼	16⅝
Northrop	60¾	60⅞
Norfolk Sthrn	30⅝	31¼
Nthn State Pwr	54½	53⅞
Norwest Corp	37	37⅝
Occidental Pet	30⅝	30⅝
Oracle	23¾	22⅞

	Dec 10 midday	Dec 9 close
Oryx Energy Co	26⅝	26¼
Owens Corning	35⅞	36⅝
PPG Industries	57¼	57⅝
PMI Group	69¾	69⅝
PNC Bank	57½	57¼
PP&L Res	22⅝	22¼
Paccar Inc	54¾	55¼
Pacificorp	27⅝	23⅝
Pac Enterprises	35⅝	35½
Pall Corp	21⅞	21⅞
Parker Hannifin	46	46¼
Peco Energy	24⅛	24½
Penney (JC)	64¾	64⅞
Pennzoil	67¾	67¼
Pepsico	35⅝	35⅞
Pfizer	75¾	75½
Pharm & Upjhn	35⅞	36
Phelps Dodge	65⅝	65⅞
Philip Morris	44⅝	44⅝
Phillips Pet	50	49¼
Pitney Bowes	87	86¼
Polaroid	45⅞	46⅝
Procter & Gmbl	79¼	79⅝
Providian	44¼	44⅞
Pub Serv E & G	28⅝	28¼
Quaker Oats	52⅝	53¾
Ralston Purina	95¾	96
Raychem Corp	46¼	46⅝
Raytheon	55¾	55⅞
Reebok Intl	33¾	33¼
Reliastar Fin	38¼	38¼
Reynolds Metals	61⅞	62⅝
Rockwell Intl	50½	50¾
Rohm & Haas	90⅝	91¼
Royal Dutch	53¾	54
Rubbermaid	24¼	24¼
SBC Comms	71½	72¾
Safeco Corp	50½	51
St Paul's Cos	83¾	83⅝
Sara Lee Corp	52½	52¼
Schering Plough	60¾	61
Schlumberger	85¼	85½
Seagram	32	32¾
Sears Roebuck	46⅝	46¼
Shell Trans	43⅞	43¼
Sherwin Wlms	29¼	29⅝
Silicon Graphics	14	14½
Snap-On-Tools	45¾	45⅝
Southern Co	23⅝	23⅝
Southtrust	59½	59¼
Sprint Corp	57¼	56¾
Stanley Works	45¾	45⅝
Sun Company	42⅝	42
Sun Microsys	39½	39¼
Suntrust	73½	74⅝
Supervalu	39⅞	39⅝
Synovus Fin	33⅝	33⅝
Sysco Corp	44	44¼
TRW Inc	55¼	55⅝
TIG Hldgs	33⅝	32⅞
Tandy Corp	40⅞	43⅝
Temple Inland	53¾	54¾
Tenet Healthcare	33¼	34⅝
Tenneco	40¼	44⅝
Texaco	54½	55
Texas Inst	43⅞	45⅝
Texas Utilities	40¾	40¼
Textron	63⅝	64⅝
Thermo Elect	37⅝	37¾
Time Warner	58⅝	58
Times-Mirror A	58½	58¼
Timken	35¾	34½
Torchmark	40⅝	41½
Toys R Us	32⅝	32½
Transamerica	114¼	114¼
Travelers	53½	54⅝
Tribune	58¾	58⅝
UST Inc	32¾	32⅝
US Bancorp	114¼	115½
UAL	91¼	91½
Unitrin	64¾	65¼
US Inds	28⅞	28¼
US West Comm	45⅝	44½
US West Media	28⅝	27⅞
USAirways Group	62⅝	63¼
USX Marathon	34⅝	35⅝
Unicom	28¾	29¼
Unilever NV	60⅝	61⅝
Union Camp	54⅝	55¼
Union Carbide	46¼	46¾
Union Pacific	61⅞	62⅝
Unisys Corp	14⅝	14¾
USF&G Corp	21¼	21¼
United Tech	74⅞	75⅝
Unocal Corp	37⅝	38⅝
VF Corp	46⅝	46¾
Wal-Mart Stores	39⅞	40⅝
Warner-Lambert	112½	114¾
Waste Mngmt	26½	26½
Wells Fargo	334¾	335⅝
Weyerhaeuser	47¼	47⅝
Whirlpool	56⅝	56⅞
Whitman	25½	25⅝
Winn Dixie	40⅝	41⅝
Witco Corp	43¾	44¾
Woolworth	21⅞	22¼
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	79⅝	80½
Xerox	74⅝	75¾
Xilinx Inc	35	36¼

مكتبة الأهرام

That prize of clean power stays elusive

GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Scientists and engineers have transformed our lives, overwhelmingly to our good. But they do tend to let us down on the really big issues. In the mediaeval days of Faust and the alchemists, what we really wanted was a formula to turn lead into gold. In spite of all the magical hype, they failed.

Five hundred years later, we know that this transformation is not chemically possible. We have also realised that the whole exercise would have been a complete waste of time. The conversion process would rapidly have come into the hands of emperors and princes. Soon after, it would have brought hyperinflation of the money supply and prices, creating an economic disaster on the scale of the Black Death.

Today, in our fondest dreams, anyone who cares about the impact of energy use on the climate might ask almost the opposite question. Why can't the combined genius and application of the world's scientists devise a way to decompose spent uranium into lead, without waiting for the aeons that nature requires?

More basically, why can't they accelerate the decay of radioactivity? If that could be done, the Kyoto summit could have been a back-slapping mutual celebration rather than an exercise in diplomacy largely irrelevant to the issues it was meant to address. Scientists have let us down again, perhaps because we ask too much.

The same energy issues might be solved if our engineering/-scientific elite could manage something that seems more achievable: a cheap way to deliver solar power to the villages of emerging economies and a practical way to power their industries from the energy of the sun. Developed economies should, at least, adopt renaissance practice and offer $10 billion in prizes for those who can make offer practical solutions.

What a breakthrough it would be if Northern countries could slash greenhouse gas emissions by switching to nuclear power, which would become viable with low interest, waste and decommissioning costs. Environmental conflicts between rich and poor nations would melt faster than the icecaps if the sun's energy could be converted cheaply to human use.

Barring such breakthroughs, an imperial market approach is possible. Paying Russia to be more energy efficient would not last long. Market-driven growth in the former Communist bloc would soon take up the slack. An OECD offer to hire a few hundred square miles of the Sahara desert for nuclear waste might be more practical if it were not so politically incorrect. But these are dreams. In our real world, energy policy decisions are tougher. Making national policy is even harder. Tony Blair's government has set itself an impossible dilemma.

At an elevated level, Britain wants to cut carbon dioxide emissions heavily regardless of the compromise in Kyoto. At street level, Downing Street wants to help the coal industry avoid its next logical step into decline. John Prescott has to handle these contradictory initiatives.

Coal had a bad deal, but not for lack of energy policy. In the 1960s, the policy was to ensure industry had enough power. In the 1970s and 1980s, it was driven by the oil shocks of 1973-74 and the subsequent blackmailing strikes of coal miners. Fuel diversity became the goal and coal was the main fuel. That is why Margaret Thatcher prematurely promoted nuclear power, ineptly embracing a change of technology.

The next great policy initiative, pushed through by Cecil Parkinson, put the emphasis on competition. He insisted on privatising power without considering coal. Competition unexpectedly drove a dash for gas, which had grown cheaper and more competitive. This process was enthusiastically accelerated by Tim Eggar, an energy minister keen to switch from politics to business. Mr Eggar tied the hands of Michael Heseltine, who was then obliged to condemn coal to virtually terminal decline in 1992, a process that will culminate in the end of the last state-imposed contracts in March.

Coal has suffered more than market forces required. The former British Coal failed to use its monopoly effectively in contract negotiations. History will show whether this was due to incompetence or ministerial dictat. Gas deals made on a take-or-pay basis also hit coal because electricity generators had a contractual incentive to use gas capacity at the expense of coal. Efforts by a few of us to resolve this market abuse were waved aside.

Given this unhappy history, it will be hard to help the remaining coal industry. The diversity argument still counts, but the gas is chiefly from the North Sea and any attempt to make gas-fired power more dependent on spot prices would make Britian's power supplies less secure. Meanwhile, the dash for gas has enabled the UK to cut pollution and greenhouse gases without hitting consumers.

Both gas and coal are fossil fuels. Coal could only compete in pollution and greenhouse gases, however, if we built new power stations that gave as good energy conversion as gas and clean-burn technology that has been shelved. And they would be needed within ten years, by which time seeds planted in Kyoto will grow.

Traditional energy policy would require some element of monopoly (impossible if the takeover of the Energy Group goes through) or EU action. At home, rationing by price, the key tool, has been ruled out on political and competitive grounds. Anyone vainly trying to construct a policy under such cinstraints will soon learn to love the falwed subtleties of the free market. All the government can now ask for coal, and all the generators can offer, is that they substitute British coal for imports. Even that will not be easy.

America's 'Eurobashing' possesses the power to cause a bad headache

AMERICAN AGENDA

BRONWEN MADDOX

Striking French lorry drivers barricading the road to US-style prosperity symbolise European political misjudgment

Europe's failure to transform its economic base is this month's rallying cry in Washington, sounding clearly even above the general gloating over the financial turmoil in Asia. In a country obsessed by health, the perjorative "Eurosclerosis" has a peculiarly literal ring, reflecting the belief that, in some sense, Europe may suddenly stop dead.

The past few months have seen a rush of thoughtful reports and proudly unresearched polemics proclaiming that Europe is in worse trouble than it has suited the United States to recognise. *Time* magazine devoted this week's cover story to the travails of European "pathfinders", struggling to find "a third way ... between uncaring capitalism and the costly welfare state". Where the poll tax riots in Trafalgar Square remain a dominant image in many Americans' minds of the European capacity for political misjudgment on the grand scale, French lorry drivers are now the favourite symbol of economic perversity, barricading the road to US-style prosperity.

Does America's rediscovered taste for Eurogloom matter? It should, and not just because the jibes are founded on the truth of rigid labour markets and actuarially indefensible pension schemes. It matters politically, because these sentiments could work against Europe's interests next year as a series of unsettled US-European controversies hit the Washington agenda.

New World trimphalism towards the old continent is hardly new, embedded in the view that all Europe is good for is wine, skiing, castles and a brief holiday from the business of making money. As the Clinton Administration remarked at the Denver "G8" summit in June, the sentiments are underpinned by the current realities of economic performance. Figures this week showed that the US unemployment rate fell to 4.6 per cent this month, the lowest for 24 years, less than half the European Union average of 10.6 per cent. Even the UK, normally excepted from US criticism of Europe, still has unemployment of more than 7 per cent.

In the past few months, the pessimistic note has been sounded even in sympathetic quarters. John Newhouse, a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution in Washington and a State Department consultant, argued in his new book *Europe Adrift* that the immediate costs of Europe's lack of leadership are opportunities missed and growth foregone, even before considering the arc of potential conflicts along the Mediterranean.

But the voice that may matter most in political terms for Europe is that of American conservatives. This month a tirade in the *American Spectator*, entitled "Who needs New England?", also said that the liberal northeast of the US was being economically destroyed by European-style economic policies. In an editorial last week headlined "Medieval Medicine", the *Wall Street Journal* attacked "a corporatist Europe still unprepared to deal with the economic realities of modern life" and labour unions with the economic views of "medieval guilds".

> ‘French lorry drivers are now the favourite symbol of economic perversity’

In partnership with the rightwing Heritage Foundation, and lured away from the analytical rigour that normally underpins even its polemics, the *Journal* last week published a marvellously comic "index of economic freedom" around the world, ranking low all EU countries except the UK and Luxembourg.

Many of the attacks are too pessimistic and dated in the light of the EU's efforts to grapple with the realities of enlargement and monetary union. But what matters most for the EU is the grain of truth that nestles inside even the wildest criticism. The "medieval medicine" to which the *Journal* rightly objected was the desire of Mario Monti, the Single Market Commissioner, to prevent "harmful tax competition" between European countries. Only in Europe, it remarked, could a ban on the pursuit of comparative advantage be graced with such an Orwellian euphemism.

But even simply in political terms, the new acerbity has the power to damage European interests. The Europessimism bolsters the instincts of many congressional conservatives, particularly members of the House of Representatives elected in 1994. Younger, Southern, more concerned with American domestic issues than with foreign policy, they find the fashion for Eurobashing a convenient justification for their introverted stance.

The Administration may be full of Europhiles, particularly now that the President's enthusiasm for all things Asian has been dampened by the revelation that the Asian miracle had a dark side. But Congress has critical influence over many of the US-European issues on next year's agenda.

The vote on Nato expansion comes up next summer, at about the same time as the decision to get troops out of Bosnia. If not overshadowed by the Paula Jones trial, currently scheduled to coincide, these debates will turn on questions of whether the US *still* believes it worthwhile to pay for European stability. Another thorn that recently pierced transatlantic relations, the Helms-Burton legislation, penalising those who trade with Cuba, may also prove a flashpoint next year.

There is one scenario in which US exasperation with European practices could actually help the European Union. Through the World Trade Organisation, the US could prove a critical force in pushing Europe to reduce its webs of subsidies. Above all, it could help it to begin to dismantle the Common Agricultural Policy. It could also restrain the wilder European fantasies about regulation of financial services, and taxation of "speculative" capital flows.

The US cannot save Europe from itself, from Brussels-originated measures that cripple its competitiveness, let alone the failure to tackle overdue reforms of national labour markets and welfare. But provided its exasperation does not reinforce its own instinct to turn inwards, away from both Europe and the WTO, it could prove a useful rod for the European finance ministers' backs. Current US foreign policy towards Europe is preoccupied mainly with Bosnia and with the eastwards expansion of Nato, coupled (in the Administration's eyes) with enlargement of the EU. But through trade policy it could have an effect on the Eurosclerosis it condemns, otherwise inaccessible to its diplomatic reach. Many would think that at least as valuable in the long run as the refashioning of Europe's defence umbrella.

French say that pension reform begins at home

The City's fund managers have been waiting for France to reform its pensions industry for nearly a decade. But now that France's left-wing Government has dropped its hostility to private pensions, City joy may be somewhat muted.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister, said he wanted to create pension funds as part of a "general mobilisation" on behalf of the Paris Bourse before European Monetary Union. Although the move may open up a market worth up to Fr50 billion (£5.1 billion) a year, the French Government is unlikely to welcome foreign fund managers with open arms.

M Strauss-Kahn appears to favour a two-tier system, run on the one hand by friendly societies, which would have an obligation to invest in French stocks, and, on the other, by private fund managers, who would be under pressure to buy Gallic shares.

The Finance Ministry is ready to lift the heavy tax burden that has prevented the development of such schemes. Legislation to create pensions — often promised but never delivered by French goverments — will be introduced next year. The move is a U-turn by the left-wing Cabinet. Although the state pension system will need to find funds equivalent to a 4.3 per cent tax rise by 2015 if it is to remain solvent, the socialists attacked previous attempts to build private pensions as an affront to "national solidarity".

The City expressed concern about implementation of the policy. Howard Foster, International Services manager at Aon Consulting, said: "The French system is magnificently egalitarian but it cannot cope with the demographic changes and it treats people as though they were all the same when they are not. But you cannot change from a pay-as-you-go system to funding overnight."

Ministers justify their change of mind on the grounds that French firms lack the capital necessary to ward off predators. "It's a question of making our companies safe from hostile foreign takeover bids," said Lionel Jospin, the Prime Minister. His comments echoed the shock felt in French financial circles at the Fr55 billion offer by the Italian insurer, Generali, for its Gallic counterpart, AGF. The move, as well as AGF's subsequent decision to approve a FF62 billion counter-offer from the German insurer, Allianz, underlined French weakness in the face of globalisation.

But the attempts to bolster the Bourse by forcing French pension funds to invest in Gallic shares could backfire, UK fund managers said. "What happens if the French market collapses?" asks Peter Yandel, head of corporate communications at Gartmore Investment Management. "They will be taking a risk investment with one hand tied behind their back."

Gerry Aherne, a director of Schroder Investment Management, said that whatever M Strauss-Kahn says, forcing French pension funds to invest in France could be tricky. "They may later realise that there is a better return elsewhere and after EMU, the situation will change."

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Yves on le run

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

WHAT is this? An invitation to a lecture to be given at Liffe by Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the Euro Commissioner who is labouring day and night to bring us the euro. I check the date. February 5, yes, he should still be with us. Because it is a little-known fact that De Silguy is making strenuous efforts not to be around once the blessed event of European Monetary Union is upon us. He is in hot water with Jacques Santer and all the other little Eurocrats because he has just told them he is standing in the French regional elections in March in Brittany. This follows his failed attempt to clamber onto the Gaullist slate for the June parliamentary elections.

De Silguy's chances of losing in March are slim — he may even end up as regional boss for the Gaullists. This would make it impossible for him to remain a Commissioner, and hence the irritation of Santer *et al*. He would have cut and run before the end of his five-year term in the year 2000. He would have to leave before things become interesting next summer, with the selection of the first wave of entrants and the wrangling over relative exchange rates. Surely no one in their right mind, having launched the euro, would want to miss out on such fun?

"That includes you too, Dobson..."

☐ *WHISPERS reach me from the poorer end of town across the river where the* Financial Times *is forced to reside that Stephen Hill, the paper's chief executive, is on his way, perhaps to a more exalted post within Pearson. Hill has not been there long, and I do hope the generosity of his leaving present does not reflect the esteem with which he is held among the staff. Or do I mean "does reflect"? Anyway, he is not returning my calls, but I am told the head-hunters are seeking his replacement.*

Checking in

NO sooner is the ink dry on Robert Peel's resignation letter from Thistle Hotels than there emerges a strong candidate to replace him as stop-gap chief executive. John Wilson, former chief operating officer of Hilton International, was all set in June to join Millennium & Copthorne Hotels as chief executive. That fell through after Hilton's parent, Ladbroke, insisted on holding him to his 18-month contract unless he promised not to poach any staff or any development opportunities he had identified. As a result the Millennium job has been filled.

Since then Wilson has been on gardening leave, but a move to Thistle might prove less awkward as the company has no pretensions to operate outside the UK. Wilson, who is in his late 50s, would certainly make a good stand-in pending an eventual sale of Thistle.

☐ *THE Institute of Directors has reported boardroom pay increases over the past year averaging 3.5 to 4 per cent. "This is very much in line with increases for other levels of employees, which averaged 3.2 to 3.4 per cent over the same period," the IoD gushes. Something in the numbers worries me, though. I commission a special 10-strong statistical hit-squad from one of the big accountants to go over the tables and get to the bottom of it. Some hours later, the head boffin pops his head around the door. "I think I have it, sir," he says. "In a string of numbers between one and ten, two is higher than one, three higher than two, and so on." I regret that he begins to lose me here. "There is a clear mathematical progression, if you look closely enough. So 3.5 to 4 per cent is actually higher than 3.2 to 3.4 per cent. Executive pay is rising faster than that of other employees, you see." Wonderful things, statistics. I just wish I understood them better.*

Into the fire

SIR DAVID ROWLAND, departing chairman of Lloyd's, is to become president-elect of Templeton College, Oxford, once known as the Oxford Centre for Management Studies. He was chairman of Templeton's executive council from 1985 to 1992 and for some peculiar reason has long had an interest in management education. Having suffered for five years at the hands of Names ranging from the defiantly angry to the downright barking, Sir David will be hoping for a quieter life. Except that John Kay, director of Oxford's Said Business School, which works closely with Templeton, says of the appointment: "Lloyd's is possibly the only institution as diverse and difficult to manage as Oxford." Oh dear.

MARTIN WALLER

David Rowland: out of the frying pan?

هكذا من الأجل

Speak up for statutory audit

Danielle Stewart says abolition could lead to economic anarchy

There was a time when it was accepted that the audit requirement was a fair price to pay for the protection of limited liability. This was probably because there used to be very little, other than the audit, to stop anybody running up massive debts in a company, and then allowing it to go into insolvent liquidation.

Times have changed. We now have legislation and regulations that result in a perception that it is much harder to avoid debt in this way. Furthermore, it is almost impossible to get bank finance for a small limited company without giving a personal guarantee. Thus the "fair price of limited liability" argument does not persuade directors that the audit is necessary.

The anti-audit lobby claim that the audit is not only redundant, but also valueless. Auditors certify historic information, then present it in a difficult to follow statutory format. The regulation of auditors has increased the paperwork that auditors have to produce, apparently increasing costs without any perceptible increase in benefits. It is hardly surprising that there are frequent calls for the abolition of the audit.

Nonetheless, it is my belief that abolition would cause grave problems for this country's economy. There are many reasons for this. First consider trade creditors. I accept that, theoretically, they cannot rely on the audit. I agree that audited figures are historic. But at least creditors have the assurance of knowing that, once a year, the commercial entity to which they are extending credit is subject to a thorough statutorily based inspection. The risk of abolishing the audit, in this context, must surely be that unscrupulous individuals might seek to abuse the protection of limited liability, with a massive resultant increase in insolvent liquidation. The unsecured trade creditors will be the losers every time.

And what about government agencies such as the Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise and the DSS? If there is no audit, they will have to inspect companies more frequently and in more detail. One anti-audit argument is that these agencies manage perfectly well in relation to unincorporated entities, but these entities do not have the protection of limited liability, so the scope for abuse is not so great. Of course government agencies are now much stricter in enforcing payment deadlines; but if unscrupulous directors decide not to declare the existence of a liability, even the strictest collection regime cannot ensure that all amounts due will be collected.

Once we allow the protection of limited liability without the check and balance of the audit, the scope for fraud is tremendous. This could cost us all dearly, in terms of higher levels of uncollected taxes and greater costs of inspection by the various government agencies. Another concern I have about the abolition of the audit is that, in my experience, directors of small private limited companies have very little familiarity with either corporate or insolvency legislation. Once there is no audit requirement, there will be nobody to check that the company has been run in accordance with the law. This could result in chaos.

Danielle Stewart says auditors must add value for clients

But all of the above are very negative reasons for retaining the audit. What about the value of the process itself? Here I believe it is up to the audit profession to take a good look at the service that it is providing and make it more valuable. For example, many firms are now introducing the concept of a business risk assessment as part of the audit package. This is a formalised way of identifying those risks that could lead to a business not achieving its operational objectives. The process is tremendously valuable to the directors of the company in identifying areas of unmanaged risk, but it is also valuable to the auditors themselves, who can focus their audit work on those areas where real problems are likely to emerge. This symbiotic process adds value in every way, by making companies more profitable, and less likely to fail through unforeseen "show-stopping" risks, while reducing the cost of the audit itself through the increased focus gained by the auditors.

Auditors are also reconsidering the techniques that they use to gain the evidence that they need to sign their report. Analytical procedures are replacing more traditional "tick and bash" techniques, thereby gathering audit evidence more cost effectively, as well as providing more opportunities for giving directors useful advice. Techniques such as business risk assessment and analytical procedures are not confined to the international firms — even the smallest practices have realised that they must change their ways, or quite simply cease to exist.

The auditing profession has taken up the challenge of the 21st century — to add value for clients, and through this to the economy as a whole — and we must not let the deregulation bandwagon wipe out all this value, and create potential economic anarchy, just for the sake of saving a relatively small amount of bureaucracy. Long live the audit!

The author is Head of Audit at Warrener Stewart and is a member of the technical directorate of the English ICA.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Swedes cause hiccup

RUMOUR has it that those sticklers for rectitude, the Swedes, have put back the prospects of the Price Waterhouse takeover of Coopers & Lybrand by a month or so. Apparently they failed to vote entirely clearly for the merger and thus the whole package of documentation for the Brussels competition authorities has to be rejigged to take note of this change in the European structure. Colin Sharman, chairman of KPMG, himself preparing a submission for Brussels ahead of his firm's proposed merger with Ernst & Young, must be extremely happy with his own impeccable European credentials.

Legal Aid memoir

THE last issue of *Certified Accountant*, the magazine of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants, before it is subsumed into a flashier and more expensive version in the new year, went out with at least one note of defiance. Its esteemed columnist is the wise old Victor McDougall, for many years secretary of the Scots ICA and before that a key figure at the Law Society. At the end of his column, on the death of civil legal aid, he added a carefully worded note: "Victor McDougall, who was the Law Society's under-secretary, Legal Aid, on the introduction of the Civil Legal Aid scheme in 1950, never expected to live to see its demise — and certainly not by fiat of a Labour Government."

Sign or fine

THE most annoying thing about a new year traditionally is dating cheques with the old year throughout January. But the Inland Revenue could change that with another self-assessment pitfall. The Revenue is still issuing "steady-as-she-goes, everything is on course" statements about the introduction of the new system. But it has become clear that a frequent reason for returning forms is that people forget to sign them. This could become costly. Those who send off an unsigned form in late January and, at the Revenue's prompting, attach the signature in early February could find it becomes the most expensive autograph they have ever given. The automatic penalty for missing the January 31 deadline, even for a signature, is £100.

ROBERT BRUCE

Cavalry offers hope to merging firms

IT IS NOT often that the cavalry rides to the rescue in the form of a couple of Swiss banks. But the main protaganists in the proposed mergers of Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse and Ernst & Young and KPMG have breathed a sigh of relief this week. In fact since news of the merger between UBS and SBC broke over the weekend the senior partners have been walking around with wide smiles on their faces.

It seems that the past couple of months of being defensive about huge global mergers are over. Now they can point to a global trend which, they argue, they are but part of. If this is so, then there are severe consequences for the firms that are not merging. Arthur Andersen, leaving aside its quarrelsome consulting arm, looks small by comparison. And Deloitte & Touche is suffering for, among other things, having an American chief who is perceived by the rest of the world to be too difficult a man to be worth bothering with.

But the consequences reach further down the ladder. The second-tier firms are now realising that to keep their position they have to do two things. They need to develop skills and expertise in fields, such as areas of corporate finance and tax, where they can compete with the biggest firms. But the expansion curve will be steep and it will probably entail not just organic growth but the buying in of big names to boost the process. Not all second-tier firms either feel happy about that or have the cash to carry it out.

And secondly they probably need to grow somewhat faster than their organic growth — good though it probably is at this stage of the economic cycle — can provide.

ROBERT BRUCE

It probably means mergers. This will be difficult. If you are going to serve global clients, even at the second-tier level, you need to have a good global network already. Few second-tier firms have a good and secure network in place. They face real problems which are made more difficult by being, for most of the firms, problems that they have not had to handle before. There may well be more than a few embarrassing disasters on the road ahead.

Meanwhile, the four "Big Six" firms going for mergers are happier with their lot. It has been a difficult time as some of the behaviour of their senior people has shown. Arrogance is always a by-product of insecurity. And so it was when the profession's leaders met with ministers at the Department of Trade and Industry to discuss such topics as liability. All went well. Ministers were following the DTI line of agreeing that the accounting firms had a case for reform of joint and several liability but wanting to know what the profession was going to provide as a quid pro quo. Then Colin Sharman, of KPMG, never a man to allow a bee to remain trapped in his bonnet for long, started a conversation along the lines of "but while we are here can we get some points sorted out on our merger". And proceeded to argue about regulatory matters. It diverted attention from the liability argument on which progress was being made and enraged his fellow negotiators.

In the same way no one is terribly happy at the way in which the large firms have thrown the process of regulating the profession into the arguments about whether the regulators should allow the mergers through. Chris Swinson, of BDO Stoy Hayward, has steered a painstaking path to acceptance of a scheme to create a partially independent regulatory system, via some kind of *public oversight board*. But suddenly the carpet has been pulled from under him.

As one cynic put it this week: "The firms have chucked the profession's negotiating stance out so that they can hold on to their clients". That is somewhat harsh. The firms are now saying that independent regulation was what they wanted all along. But it does look a strange time to make such a fuss about it.

Meanwhile, they must just keep their heads down and keep the process running. Unlike the Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand partnership vote, which ran simultaneously and globally, the intention of Ernst & Young and KPMG is to go for the vote piecemeal. Hence the American partnership will vote before Christmas, while the UK partners will not have proposals until the end of January and a vote in late February. This is probably not a bad idea. The signs are still that the regulatory authorities are taking their time, particularly in Brussels, where, as one observer put it this week: "They are bored with airlines." But they are interested in the processes that make up the accountancy market and the structure and implications of large partnerships. So with regulatory decisions taking time it makes sense for the firms to do likewise. And just hope that, like the ambitious Swiss, more people confirm the trend to globalisation in the meantime.

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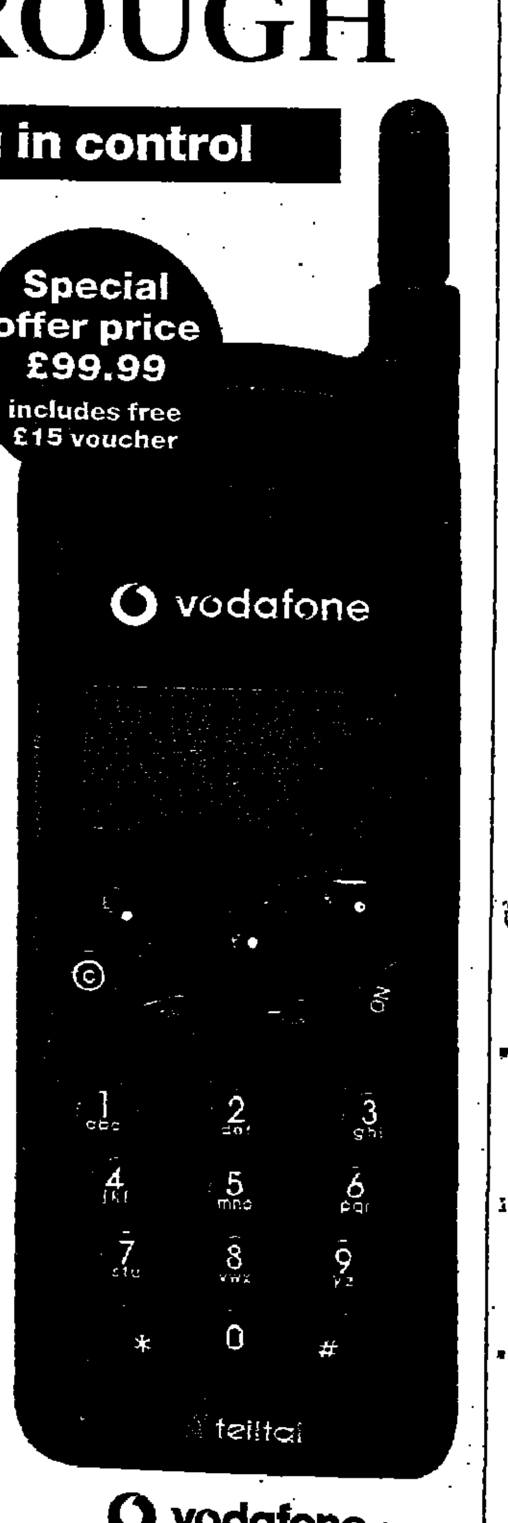

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CHANGING TIMES

BoS sells £13bn trustee funds to US bank

By Richard Miles
Banking Correspondent

BANK of Scotland (BoS) has agreed to sell its £13 billion fund trusteeship business to State Street Bank, the US provider of services to institutional investors.

Stewart Henderson, general manager of Bank of Scotland, said the disposal was prompted by the rapid globalisation of tne custody and trusteeship industry. The sale, for what could be several millions over a number of years, will also enable the bank to focus on its core businesses at a time when information technology costs are rising.

Mr Henderson said: "This saves us from being diverted. Technology is driving the trusteeship business, and with both the Millenium and European Monetary Union coming up, each system costs money to redevelop." He added that the cost of updating the banks' systems for the year 2000 was "in the tens of millions".

State Street, assuming it receives regulatory approval, will take over the trusteeship of 183 funds with a combined value of approximately £13 billion. It has also agreed to take over the lease on the Edinburgh premises of the business, giving the bank its first office in Scotland.

The acquisition marks State Street's first significant move into the fund trusteeship business in the UK. It is already a leading supplier of custodial services to UK pension funds, controlling about $25 billion of assets.

Ronald Logue, executive vice-president at State Street, said the acquisition "represents a significant step forward in our mission to service the needs of institutional investors and collective investment vehicles globally".

Unitholders should see no difference as a result of the deal, nor incur extra costs. The two banks hope to complete the transaction by the end of the year.

Strong pound forces sharp fall in David S Smith profits

By Martin Barrow

DAVID S SMITH, one of Britain's last surviving independent paper manufacturers, suffered a sharp fall in profits in the first half because of the strength of sterling, which exacerbated extremely competitive conditions.

The company also gave warning that second-half conditions were unlikely to improve significantly, prompting an 8½p fall in the shares to 196½p. Earlier this year, the shares traded at 325½p.

In the six months to November 1 pre-tax profits fell to £29.3 million, from £58.6 million. Group turnover fell 9.8 per cent, to £554.8 million, with about half of the fall attributed to adverse currency movements. Earnings fell to 7.1p (14.1p) a share. However, the interim dividend rises 3.8 per cent, to 2.7p a share.

Alan Clements, chairman, said: "Our earnings have been badly hit by sterling's strength and an extremely competitive environment for packaging paper and office products. These factors seem set to continue into the second half. In the medium term, good growth in demand, industry consolidation and rationalisation of industry capacity should lead to a gradual improvement in our markets."

He added: "We believe we are near the bottom of the paper pricing cycle and while current profitability is disappointing we remain convinced the group has a good future."

Peter Williams, chief executive, said that if the pound held at the DM2.95 level, it would result in further deterioration of up to £7 million in results for the financial year. He added: "Sterling is going to continue to weigh on us..."

Turnover in the packaging and paper division suffered a 15.4 per cent fall, to £354.9 million, and operating profits fell to £23.9 million from £52 million. The division's overall sales volumes rose marginally but could not offset the continued slide in selling prices and the translation impact of strong sterling. Operating margins in the division fell sharply to 6.9 per cent, from 12.4 per cent previously.

Profits from office products fell to £9.7 million from £10.7 million, on turnover that rose slightly to £199.9 million from £195.7 million.

In spite of the half-year setback Mr Williams said that David S Smith, with gearing of just 28 per cent, has the financial strength to contemplate making acquisitions. He said: "We are looking to fill in our geographical holes like Germany. We would like to continue to grow in Italy and in France. We would obviously look at shareholder interest. I think we could go for a medium-size acquisition," he added.

John Rudgard, left, and Esmond Bulmer are confident that advertising will be able to bring new life to the sector

Cider woe spreads to Bulmer

By Chris Ayres

MORE misery in the cider market was revealed yesterday as H P Bulmer, the maker of Strongbow, Woodpecker and Scrumpy Jack, said its pre-tax profits had fallen 14 per cent, from £16.6 million to £14.3 million, in the six months to October 24.

The announcement follows similarly bleak results from Matthew Clark and Merrydown, Bulmer's rivals. However, Bulmer, whose chief executive is John Rudgard, said it was confident that advertising could bring new life to the sector, and has added about £2.5 million to its own marketing budget.

Turnover fell 5 per cent, from £163 million to £154 million, with earnings per share falling 13 per cent, from 20.21p to 17.63p. An interim dividend of 5.2p, up from 4.9p, will be paid on February 16.

The results sent Bulmer's share price sliding to its lowest level for almost three years, falling 15p to 392½p, well below the high of 626p this year.

Esmond Bulmer, the company's chairman, said: "Most of the decline in the market has occurred either as a consequence of the introduction of the high-strength cider duty or poorly performing own-label and economy ciders.

"In an otherwide dull market the performance of Bulmer brands, with the exception of White Lightning, continue to give cause for encouragement."

He added that Bulmer's international operations were performing well. The company has recently bought Harvest Wine, a cider maker in New Zealand, and total export volume has grown 18 per cent. However, Mr Bulmer said that the strength of sterling had affected both sales and profit.

Morland calls for fair duty

By Martin Barrow

MORLAND, the pubs and brewing company whose beer brands include Old Speckled Hen and Ruddles, yesterday lent its voice to industry protests over the discrepancy between beer duty in the UK and in Europe.

Martin Mays-Smith, chairman, said: "This distortion leads to a significant loss of government revenue, the encouragement of criminal activity, a weakened brewing industry, and a far-from-level playing field on which to compete with our European counterparts."

However, Mr Mays-Smith said he was confident the European Commission would accept UK beer supply agreements.

Morland was announcing a rise in pre-tax profits to £16.57 million, from £14.25 million, for the year to September 30. Turnover rose to £103.9 million from £83.4 million.

Adjusted earnings increased to 39.7p a share from 37.5p. The total dividend rises to 13.18p a share from 12.49p, with a final 9.39p. The shares fell 7½p to 467½p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

ICS Group names new chairman

TREVOR WHEATLEY, former chairman of Control Techniques, has emerged at the helm of the struggling Industrial Control Services Group. Mr Wheatley, who sold his former business to America's Emerson Electric for £214 million in 1995, is to become chairman, with a personal equity investment in ICS of £1.5 million. The company's new chief executive will be Geoff Withrington, former managing director of Eurotherm and Fisons Instruments.

ICS is raising £32.1 million by way of a placing and open offer of new shares at 30p a share, fully underwritten by HSBC Investment Bank. The funds will be used to reduce existing borrowings and to fund future working capital requirements. ICS, whose shares have fallen from 175p earlier this year, also estimated a pre-tax loss of £27 million for the half year to November 30, but said it expected to return to profit in the second half. **Tempus, page 30**

Razorback raises £2.3m

RAZORBACK Vehicles Corporation, an Australian company that installs cargo beds and tailgates in Volkswagen Transporter light commercial vehicles, has raised £2.3 million in London through a flotation on the Alternative Investment Market. The placing of new shares at 102p each by Peel, Hunt values the company at £23.1 million. The company incurred a loss of A$4.3 million (£1.7 million) before tax in the year to June 30. Share dealings began yesterday.

Drummond payout held

DRUMMOND, the maker of fabric for woollen garments, is holding the interim dividend at 0.5p a share in spite of a a fall in pre-tax profits to £503,000, from £805,000, in the half-year to September 30. Sales fell to £28.3 million (£29.7 million). Stefan Simmonds, chairman, said profits were affected by overseas competition arising from sterling's strength and second-half profits were unlikely to match the first half if the pound stayed strong. Earnings fell to 1.56p a share (2.97p).

Pemberstone's £8m deal

PEMBERSTONE, the specialist property investment company, is to buy 205 rented residential properties from Homes for Tenants, a Business Expansion Scheme company, for £8.22 million. The portfolio comprises a mix from detached houses to studio flats in London, the South East and South West, Midlands and South Wales. The purchase is Pemberstone's first from the "exit" BES sector where more than £600 million of rented residential property is likely to be available.

Firth Rixson sets record

FIRTH RIXSON, the specialist engineering group based in Sheffield, lifted pre-tax profits to a record £16.1 million in the year to September 30, from £5.1 million the previous year when figures were hit by a £2.57 million charge against disposals. Adjusted earnings were 8.2p a share (4p). The dividend rises to 2.8p a share, from 1.4p, with a final of 2p. Martin Llowarch, chairman, said there was a strong contribution from the US and a continuing good performance in the UK.

Sage grows and welcomes EMU

By Chris Ayres

SAGE, the supplier of accounting software and PC products, yesterday reported a 25 per cent rise in pre-tax profits from the year to September 30 from £30 million to £38 million.

The Newcastle company said it hopes to benefit from European economic and monetary union and will be marketing a range of EMU compliant products and services during next year.

Turnover was £152 million, up from £136.2 million, and earnings per share were 23.43p, up 27 per cent from 18.5p. A total dividend of 2.9p, up from 2.64p, will be paid on February 23.

Sage said its US businesses, although in a competitive environment, had shown good growth in profits and margins. It added that SAARI and Sybel, its two French companies, had been merged into one business and were well positioned for growth.

Michael Jackson, the company's chairman, said: "Further opportunities exist to expand the business internationally and we are well placed to take advantage of these as and when they arise.

"The continuing organic growth of our existing businesses should ensure a satisfactory outcome for the current year."

Mr Jackson recently replaced David Goldman, the founder of Sage, who retired in September because of ill-health. The company said Mr Goldman's strengths, flair and strategic vision were widely admired. Tom Maxfield, the company's UK sales director, has also retired.

Railtrack welcomes review

RAILTRACK yesterday welcomed the move by John Swift, the Rail Regulator, to launch a review of how much Railtrack charges rail companies to use its track and stations, despite the announcement knocking nearly 8 per cent off its share price (Jason Nissé writes).

Mr Swift said he would review the access charging structure. This allows charges to rise no more than 2 per cent less than the retail prices index each year and runs until the end of 2001. It also allows for penalties to be payable by Railtrack for service failures. The new structure is expected in 2002.

Railtrack said that it was encouraged that the Rail Regulator wanted to draw upon best practice operating across the privatised utilities. Commentary, page 29

Clean-coal plan at Scottish Hydro

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

SCOTTISH Hydro-Electric has a plan for clean-coal generation "waiting in the wings" if the Government were to keep a permanent moratorium on gas-fired stations and the economics of clean-coal were improved.

The Scottish generator and electricity distributor, which yesterday committed £220 million to a planned upgrade of its Peterhead station, has based its expansion strategy heavily on gas-fired power station development in England and has a number of key section 36 planning approvals — the consents from the Department of Trade and Industry which have now been blocked.

Roger Young, chief executive, said the company "will make representations to the Scottish Office and through them to the DTI" over the moratorium which was announced by the Prime Minister last week. But he said: "If the Government were to find that clean coal would be supported, then we have a clean-coal project waiting in the wings."

Mr Young said clean coal could be burned at Keadby, the gas-fired station near Scunthorpe. But with section 36 approvals for large extensions to both Keadby and Seabank — its Bristol station jointly owned with BG — Mr Young said the moratorium was not a pressing concern.

The company yesterday reported pre-tax profits up 17 per cent to £71.9 million in the half year to September 30. The interim dividend, up 10 per cent to 5.81p, will be paid on March 18.

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Do NAV to Dec 19	136.83	128.83		
UK Equity Safeguard	109.91	117.55	..	2.47
Do NAV to Sep 19	108.93	106.93		
Cash	955.40	960.18	..	5.75
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	371.30	395.00	- 3.20	1.72
UK Small Cos	78.69	83.50†		0.49
FTSE 250 Index	98.71	105.57	.	2.11
Geared UK Index	2317.36	2446.37	-36.00	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	81.37	84.00	+ 0.22	
Monthly Inc	41.95	44.83†		8.72
International Funds				
American Gen	295.40	313.10	- 7.00	
American Smal	252.45	269.91		
JG US Index	2343.53	2469.25		4.60
European Gen	326.70	345.50	- 4.70	
European Smal	141.13	150.93		
Japan Gen	106.40	112.91	- 0.20	
Asia Pacific	69.72	74.30†		
Pacific Smal	113.64	121.53		
Greater China	213.46	228.30		
Latin America	108.83	116.39		
Int Growth	169.73	181.57		
Balanced Exempt	151.30	156.80		
Global Strategy	48.52	51.88		
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01203 553 231				
General Acc	837.80	891.20	- 11.80	2.55
General Inc	682.80	736.30	- 9.00	2.55
UK Growth Acc	579.50	616.40	- 7.70	2.52
UK Growth Inc	366.30	389.60	- 4.90	2.52
Higher Inc Acc #	1065.00	1132.00	- 10.00	4.82
Higher Inc Inc #	546.30	581.10	- 5.60	4.82
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Europe	444.60	472.90	- 4.50	0.60
Brit Excell	115.20	122.50	- 1.50	2.28
Brit Fndmtls Acc	145.10	154.30	- 1.00	4.51
Brit Fndmtls Inc	93.05	98.98	- 0.71	4.51
Global Opps	110.60	117.60	- 0.60	0.30
Balanced Acc	72.84	77.48	- 0.67	2.38
Balanced Inc	66.64	70.89	- 0.61	2.38
Japan Acc	34.72	36.93	- 0.25	.
Pac Basin Acc	292.10	310.70	- 8.90	2.15
ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS				
0345 717 373				
Gilts & Fixed Int	141.50	150.10†	+ 0.60	5.96

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
COIF CHARITY FUNDS				
0171 588 1815				
Investment Inc	894.09	907.84	+18.10	3.83
Investment Acc	4296.73	4361.67	+22.00	.
Fixed Int Inc	133.66	134.20	+ 0.17	8.64
Fixed Int Acc	295.53	298.59	+ 0.33	..
CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD				
0171 556 8800				
Beckman Intl	97.02	102.02	+ 1.36	6.85
Buck Bio-Tech	39.30	42.30†		
Acorn Ethical 1st	212.68	226.26†	..	0.55
City Fin Assets	87.75	92.15	.	2.88
City Fin Intl	86.53	92.05†	+ 1.34	0.06
Frans Hse Cap	367.66	391.15		1.80
Buckley Wrld Grth	143.48	152.09	+ 4.81	.
Shaw Utilities	83.42	85.08†	- 0.46	3.53
CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 711 0771 Admin. 01277 227 300				
Emerging Markets	49.53	52.55	- 0.40	...
CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD				
0345 772 233				
American Grth	99.96	106.34	- 1.08	
Dragon Growth	49.03	52.43	- 1.18	1.39
Equity High Inc	113.98	120.67†	- 1.09	3.11
-do- Accum	172.04	182.05	- 1.65	3.11
Extra Income Inc	28.75	30.27	+ 0.11	6.18
Extra Income Acc	33.42	35.19	+ 0.13	6.18
European Grth	81.16	85.88	- 1.22	0.11
Evergreen	35.32	37.77	- 0.51	.
General Equity	132.86	140.22	- 1.28	2.25
Japan Growth	33.66	35.81	+ 0.26	..
Pedigree Grth	80.36	85.03	- 0.79	1.44
Pwd Sm Cos Inc	41.68	44.11†	+ 0.20	1.33
-do- Accum	44.88	47.49	+ 0.22	1.33
Retirement Inc #	33.94	36.11	- 0.22	4.94
Special Sits	55.07	59.22	- 0.34	2.36
UK & Overseas	66.94	70.83	- 0.90	0.48
COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (UK) LTD				
01634 898 000				
Balanced	81.60	85.00	- 0.80	3.52
Capital	100.18	104.35	- 1.08	1.91
High Income	56.07	58.40†	+ 0.15	6.48
Top 50	73.11	76.15	- 0.99	1.92
COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD				
0181 686 9818				
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)				
Income Funds				
Equity Inc	227.81	237.33	- 0.85	4.27
Long Gilt	50.35	52.43	+ 0.22	4.94
Monthly Inc Plus	58.35	60.79	+ 0.22	7.37
Preference Share	56.22	58.57	+ 0.17	6.66
Balanced Funds				

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
LEGAL & GENERAL (UT MGRS) LTD				
Enquiries: 01222 448412 Dealing: 01222 883512				
Equity Dist @	731.80	731.80	- 8.58	2.00
-do- Accum @	1547.00	1547.00	-18.00	2.00
Equity Income #	122.80	122.80	- 0.80	4.45
UK Tactical Allocta @	83.77	83.77†	- 1.26	5.13
European @	178.80	178.80	- 2.30	0.22
Far Eastern @	163.70	163.70	- 2.20	
Fixed Interest @	58.29	58.29†	+ 0.09	7.38
Gilt @	97.95	97.95†	+ 0.22	5.99
Global Growth @	83.13	83.13	- 0.73	0.18
Intl Bond @	48.86	48.86	+ 0.02	4.99

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Income Trust	110.93	110.93	+ 0.16	6.20
Pens Growth	126.15	126.15		
Pens Inc Protct	112.59	112.59		.
UK Index Tracking @	161.49	161.49	- 1.16	2.30
WAVERLEY UNIT TST MGMT LTD				
0161 831 7495				
Australasian Gold	10.83	11.40	- 0.90	
Pacific Basin	23.14	24.35†	- 0.03	
Global Bond (US$)	0.9484	0.9990	-0.0008	
Penny Share	46.53	48.98†	- 0.19	
Japan Smlr Cos	24.67	25.97	+ 0.37	...
WHITTINGDALE UNIT TST MGMT LTD				
0171 623 2444				
Short Dtd Gilt	130.60	132.10		
US Govt Bd (US$)	0.8149	0.8224	+0.0001	
Gilt Income	52.71	53.56	+ 0.10	6.30
Gilt Growth	95.99	98.35	+ 0.26	.
Sterling Bond	51.33	52.16†	- 0.20	6.10
WOOLWICH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0181 298 4900				
Intl Mgd	64.43	68.43		1.73
UK Stockmaster	127.30	135.30		2.08
Corporate Bd Inc	50.76	50.68		5.95
Do Accum	55.10	56.23		5.95

Source: FT Information

* Yield expressed as CAR (Compound Annual Return); † Ex dividend; ‡ Middle price. ... No significant data. # Periodic Charge deducted from capital. @ Exit Charge.

هكذا من الاصل

Equities rally towards close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
584	407½	Allied Domecq†	535½	− 8	4.8	13.7
628	385	Bulmer (HP)	392½	− 15	4.8	12.0
75½	40¼	Burn Stewart	45½	..	9.1	16.2
1040	865	Glenmorangie A	950	..	1.8	22.6
638	425½	Grand Met	587	+ 6	3.2	18.8
639½	474	Guinness	585	+ 5	3.3	18.1
380	280	Highland Distl	305½	− 1	3.6	14.2
336	181½	Matthew Clark	182½	− 1	14.1	5.7
109½	49¼	Minmet W	63½		6.1	
2008¾	1434¾	SA Breweries†	1434¾	− 59½	2.6	..

BANKS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1521½	918¾	ABN-AMRO	1253½	+ 8¾	2.5	18.0
1050	710	Abbey Ntl	1013	− 4	3.4	16.6
793	532½	Alliance & Leic	784	− 1	2.6	18.4
606	388½	Allied Irish	598	− 8	3.0	17.6
516¼	363½	Aus New Z	429¾	− 4	4.7	
4953¾	2875	Bank America†	4909¾	− 43¾		
595	291½	Bank Scotland	588¾	− 1½	1.9	15.8
1800	978½	Barclays	1685	+ 26	2.5	15.8
920½	517½	Bk of Ireland	820½	+ 6½	2.3	20.2
8959¾	6006¼	Citicorp	8181¼	− 378¾		...
1759¾	1268¾	Commerzbk	1646¾	+ 3¼	2.8	
862½	403½	Dai Ichi Kan Y†	471¾	+ 12½	0.8	...
4593¾	2708¾	Deutsche Bk	4243¾	+ 28¾	1.4	..
1300	759¾	Espirito Santo	1181¼	− 9¾	3.1	
947½	249	Fuji Bank Y†	302¾	− 10½	1.3	58.4
2960½	1272½	HSBC	1820	− 88	8.5	13.1
2258½	1226	HSBC Hk	1546	− 84	3.7	12.5
783	507	Halifax	736	+ ½	2.5	24.8
645	483½	Irish Perm	641½	− 1½	2.4	17.7
860½	424	Lloyds TSB	757	− 13½	2.4	22.1
1008	669½	Nat Aust Bk	828½	− 10½	4.7	
1029	663½	Nat West	909	− 17	3.8	15.8
525	449	Northern Rock	525	+ 3½	2.2	20.7
790	508	Ryl Bk Scot†	780	+ 3	3.4	15.3
1093½	592½	Stand Chart	725	− 35	2.7	12.7
£164¾	£164¾	Wells Fargo	£164¾		1.9	
403¾	315½	Westpac	378½	− 3¾	3.9	
373½	267½	Woolwich	315		3.1	18.7

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
929	695	Bass	866	− 9½	3.9	15.8
68¼	43½	Bk for the Bar	54		4.2	11.4
205	132½	Burtonwood Brw	153½		5.8	13.3
156½	127½	City Centre Rest	132		2.4	20.5
744½	575½	Compass Gp	727½	+ 7	1.7	25.0
305	250	Eldridge P 'A'	289½	− ½	2.7	
266½	221	Enterprise Inns†	244		3.8	
485	472	Fuller Smi 'A'	482½	+ 2½	3.1	13.8
586	310	Greenalls Grp	415	− 3	4.8	10.3
770	610	Greene King	701½	+ 4	3.0	14.2
237½	152½	Grosvenor Inns	198	− 1	4.0	20.8
293½	218½	Groupe Chez Ger	281½		1.4	22.7
298½	213½	Hardy Hanso	229½	+ 2	6.2	9.9
2850	2150	H&R J	2162½		3.5	12.1
78	57½	Inn Business	59	+ ½	3.4	9.4

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BRITISH FUNDS

1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Grs red yld
SHORTS (under 5 years)						
116	113	Treas 4½% 1998	116		3.99	6.63
103¼	100	Exch 9¾% 1998	100		9.73	7.21
101	100	Treas 7¼% 1998	100		7.25	7.31
110	102	Treas 14% 1998-01	102	−	13.60	7.33
114	106	Treas 15½% 1998	106	−	14.59	7.30
108	104	Exch 12% 1998	104	−	11.51	7.21
106	102	Treas 9½% 1999	102		9.28	7.19
111	106	Exch 12¼% 1999	106	−	11.54	7.13
108	104	Treas 10½% 1999	104	−	10.04	7.08
99	96	Treas 6% 1999	98		6.09	6.94
109	105	Conv 10¼% 1999	105	...	9.63	7.00
106	103	Conv 9% 2000	104	−	8.64	6.94
104	102	Treas 8% 2000	103		7.76	6.87
104	102	Treas 8½% 2000	102	−	8.26	6.97
115	113	Treas 13% 2000	113		11.41	7.00
112	98	Treas 10% 2001	108		9.20	6.91
101	98	Treas 7% 2001	100		5.95	6.77
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)						
102	97	Treas 7% 2002	101	−	6.91	6.91
122	109	Treas 9¾% 2002	111	−	8.72	6.75
107	102	Treas 8% 2003	106	−	7.53	6.63
117	111	Treas 10% 2003	115	−	8.64	6.65
116	112	Treas 11½% 2001-04	113	−	10.16	6.92
90	82	Fund 3½% 1999-04	89	+	3.91	5.39
118	109	Conv 9½% 2004	115		8.20	6.58
102	94	Treas 6¾% 2004	101		6.67	6.54
114	104	Treas 8½% 2005	112	+	7.57	6.49
122	110	Conv 9½% 2005	116	+	8.13	6.48
130	124	Treas 12½% 2003-05	128	+	9.75	6.68
108	98	Treas 7¾% 2006	107	+	7.01	6.44
110	99	Treas 7¾% 2006	108	+	7.15	6.48
106	100	Treas 8% 2002-06	105	−	7.63	6.78
123	115	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	121	+	9.68	6.72
116	105	Treas 8½% 2007	114	+	7.43	6.46
107	95	Treas 7¼% 2007	106	+	6.82	6.36
121	108	Treas 9% 2008	120	+	7.47	6.34
114	101	Treas 8% 2009	113	+	7.06	6.38
99	86	Treas 6¼% 2010	98	+	6.34	6.40
124	109	Conv 9% 2011	123	+	7.31	6.41
125	109	Treas 9% 2012	124†	+	7.25	6.42
93	80	Treas 5½% 2008-12	92	+	5.94	6.29
112	98	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	111	+	6.93	6.47
LONGS (over 15 years)						
116	100	Treas 8% 2013	115	+	6.92	6.41
118	101	Treas 8% 2015	117	+	6.80	6.34
126	107	Treas 8¾% 2017	126	+	6.92	6.37
121	101	Tr 8% 2021	120	+	6.64	6.31
UNDATED						
54	43	War Ln 3½%	54	+	6.40	
38	32	Treas 2½%	38	+	6.56	
60	49	Consols 4%	60	+	6.61	
INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:					5%	3%
194	184	Treas IL 2½% 2001	194	+	3.03	3.36
191	180	Treas IL 2½% 2003	191	+	3.02	3.26
123	117	Treas IL 4¾% 2004	123	+	2.99	3.19
205	190	Treas IL 2% 2006	205	+	3.03	3.18
187	170	Treas IL 2½% 2009	187	+	3.00	3.12
185	176	Treas IL 2½% 2011	185	+	3.01	3.11
162	146	Treas IL 2½% 2013	162	+	3.01	3.10
175	153	Treas IL 2½% 2016	175	+	3.01	3.09
170	147	Treas IL 2½% 2020	170	+	3.03	3.10
143	122	Treas IL 2½% 2024	143	+	3.02	3.09
140	119	Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	140	+	3.01	3.07

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
158½	84½	Abacus Recruit	159½		1.2	18.4
217	170	Cale Inns†	207½		1.8	15.8
262½	180	Dawson Hldgs	220		2.7	21.2
51¼	26½	Freepages	26½	− ¼	..	
98½	64½	Megalomedia	65		0.4	31.3
65	22½	Memory Corp	27½	− 2½	...	
590	280	Press Radio†	396		1.6	
1265	732½	Ramco Egy	877½		0.1	
783	619½	Southern News	738½	− 1	3.4	19.6
82½	65½	Southern Vectis	82½	+ 2	3.2	17.2
60¾	17¼	Trocadero†	18			

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension, † Ex dividend, ‡ Ex scrip, ▲ Ex rights issue ▼ Ex all, § Ex capital distribution. * Figures to report awaited .. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

Oh, oh ... so compassionate

Martyn Palmer meets actor Pierce Brosnan, the man taking James Bond into the next century

Pierce Brosnan vividly remembers a Thursday night, a little more than a decade ago, when the chance to play James Bond seemed to have slipped from his grasp forever. He sat alone in his Los Angeles home surrounded by a complete set of the works of Ian Fleming newly installed on the bookcase in his study, serving as a rather poignant reminder of what was not to be.

"I felt a kind of ugly numbness when it all fell apart," he says. "It was a very painful experience." Brosnan had been the favourite to follow Roger Moore and the Bond producers had offered him the job when NBC, who had him under contract for the TV show *Remington Steele*, refused to release him. "By the Saturday Timothy Dalton was in as Bond and it went out of my life. Never in my wildest dreams did I think it would come back."

So it is with a justifiable sense of satisfaction that Brosnan, in London to promote his second Bond film, *Tomorrow Never Dies* (*reviewed on facing page*), can look up at buses and billboards from Sunset Boulevard to Leicester Square and see himself peering down in the classic 007 pose.

His first Bond movie, *GoldenEye*, was released in 1995 and has been the most successful of all the 18 films in the series, grossing $350 million worldwide. Not only was Bond back, he was back in a style to which even he may not have been quite accustomed to before.

"When we came to do *GoldenEye*, I felt this amazing calmness because I had nothing to lose and everything to gain. It meant a lot to me but it felt right. And it did seem, after the earlier mishaps, that in some way I was destined to play this role."

Second time around, making *Tomorrow Never Dies*, he felt more confident of what he was bringing to the role, although he admits that the filming — on location in the UK, France, Thailand, Germany, Mexico and America — was, at least initially, fraught. As shooting started in April this year, reports began to circulate of problems with the script and of tension on set between some of the principal actors and British director Roger Spottiswoode.

"I think that *Tomorrow Never Dies* was a difficult movie for all concerned. It was difficult for the producers, for Roger because it was his first Bond movie, and for me. There were problems with the script to start with. There had been some rewrites and I think at one point we were in danger of throwing the baby out with the bathwater, but we overcame that as we went along.

> ‘When they are big and bold, the Bond movies are untouchable’

"The Bond character has travelled well and has lived a long time over many, many years and many movies. And just when everybody thought it was down and out for the count, it comes back. The Bond movies, when they are big and bold, are untouchable and the Americans don't have them. We should be proud of that."

And so should Brosnan. He brings Bond to the screen with a verve and style that was lacking in the 1980s. He is the fifth Bond — following Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore and Dalton. If pushed, he pays homage to Connery as the best of the bunch.

Brosnan remembers seeing his first Bond movie as a ten-year-old, shortly after his family had moved to London from Co Meath, in Ireland. "It was Sean Connery in *Goldfinger* in 1964 at the old ABC in Putney High Street. Amazing. I'd never seen a film in Technicolor before and it completely overwhelmed me.

"Connery was my Bond, although Roger brought a style and humour to it that cannot be denied. It's hard for me to articulate or define what my Bond is about. I'd rather leave that up to the history books."

He does, however, feel that his Bond owes many character traits to Ian Fleming's original creation, and likes to refer to that set of novels, nestling back at his home in LA, for inspiration and guidance. "I go back to *Casino Royale* again and again for a number of reasons. It's a very fine book and, I think, almost a blueprint for Bond's character.

"But I refer to the others too. I pull one down from the bookcase, open it from any page and start reading what Fleming put down about the man. I like to do it to acquaint myself with the character again and then I go to the script. And I do think that our Bond is pretty close to the original character in some ways.

"I think that Fleming created a character who did have doubts, who did have fears, a man who leaned into the vodka martinis and leaned into the dependence and use — and sometimes the abuse — of women."

But it would be wrong, says Brosnan, to be hidebound by the originals, both cinematic and print. "The climate has changed dramatically. We are making a movie that we hope is in step with the times, so you can't repeat what Sean Connery did in the 1960s. That would be a period piece.

"When you talk about a 1990s Bond, I think Bond should remain fairly constant in character and tone but it is the director who drives the piece on. I think with *GoldenEye* and *Tomorrow Never Dies* we have an edginess and sophistication of film-making that wasn't there before. It had lost its way over the years, certainly after Roger's time, and they just churned them out."

Brosnan feels there are more glimpses of the human side of Bond in *Tomorrow Never Dies* and that is something he would like to see develop in future films. "I think you have to show Bond's ruthless streak. He is a killer, a survivalist, a man who is a hunter and is hunted and I think that was lost over the years. But I also think that he is a man who is somewhat haunted by these deaths and these killings. It has got to get to him in some way and I would like to see that develop.

"But you can't move too far from what Bond is. There is a ruthlessness mixed in with a suave, sophisticated man of the world, a womanising, vodka-swilling chauvinist. He's still lusty after all these years . . . and quite right too."

At 43, Brosnan is looking forward to taking Bond into a new century and possibly beyond, before handing over a thriving franchise to a new man. "I'm the fifth man to play this part and there is no reason when my day is done that some other guy can't come in and fill these shoes. Why not? It's hard to define why the films have survived for so long — the music, the locations, the girls, the gadgets — but ultimately, I suppose, it's the man who plays the role that makes Bond live."

The new-look Bond: "You can't repeat what Sean Connery did in the 1960s. That would be a period piece"

SNAP VERDICT

‘James is back on form’

Every week, young film fans discuss some of the latest releases . . .

■ ***TOMORROW NEVER DIES***

Jethro Aukin, 19: After the disappointment of *GoldenEye*, James Bond is back on form.

Emma Rolph, 18: Jonathan Pryce delivers the most villainous of villains. This definitely is a must-see.

Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 19: The constant product endorsement slows the pace of the whole movie. Bond seems to have sold out.

Sharada Osman, 19: Bond girl Michelle Yeoh really kicks butt. Now that's what I call Girl Power!

■ ***PERSONS UNKNOWN***

Jethro: The performances are competent despite the appalling dialogue.

Emma: The body count is shockingly high in this below average thriller.

Leslie: Clichéd characters uttering clichéd dialogue. That's all you need to know.

Sharada: This is one of those movies that takes itself a little too seriously.

■ ***I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER***

Jethro: Predictable, trite rubbish. I think I'll have to go again.

Emma: A great date movie — so scary that you will spend the entire evening in each other's arms.

Leslie: In this film, picturesque smalltown America comes under attack from a psychopath. All in all, my kind of movie.

Sharada: All of the cartoon-like violence just made me laugh.

THEATRE: Incestuous passions stirred in Stratford; yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum in Hammersmith; nymphs and old satyrs in Dublin

Lust, fear and other family values

Goodnight Children Everywhere
Other Place, Stratford

Pity the protagonist of Richard Nelson's fine new play. He returns to Clapham after spending the war as an evacuee in Canada, where he was hit by his uncle, saw a pet kitten drowned by his aunt, and got persecuted for his English accent at school. And what happens when, back in England, he slips behind a screen in the living room and scrubs himself in the family's tin bath? His sister, pregnant by a doctor-husband twice her age, gives him what is known in professional circles as hand relief. The Canadian mountains are safe beside this torrid London swamp.

For a scene and a bit, I wasn't sure I would like *Goodnight Children*. There was an awful lot of strenuous giggling and whooping as 17-year-old Peter's three sisters welcomed him home. But as the jokes, games and festive tickling became more erotically suggestive, I realised it was necessary preparation. What Nelson proceeds to do is to cram a jolly 1940s comedy with sexual desperation. Think of early Rattigan adapted by John Ford, or imagine one of Harry Enfield's period spoofs rejigged by Pinter, or introduce incest into *Brief Encounter*, and you have the rough idea.

Nelson is the author of *Between East and West*, *Some Americans Abroad* and other plays involving dislocation, cultural contradiction and rootlessness. He is just the man to dramatise the muddles of Simon Scardifield's Peter and of siblings who have been separated and emotionally maimed by the war. As Robin Weaver's sultry Vi remarks, they have missed each other's lives. For his seducer, Cathryn Bradshaw's Ann, Peter is brother, stranger, boy, man — and, since she mothered him when he was small, a kind of son too.

Scardifield is strong when he can brood or look bewildered, but struggles when he has to proclaim his love for his sister's body. In all other respects, though, Nelson has written a remarkably deft, assured play. In the person of Ann's husband Mike (Colin McCormack) he gives us a lovely case study of the English habit of denying painful truths, and in that of his fellow doctor Hugh (Malcolm Scates) all the instinctive sexism of 50 years ago. He also displays huge skill in gradually undermining the mystique of parents who were killed in the war and exposing Father as an adulterous drunk and Mother as a deeply troubled woman.

Everywhere there is frustration and need, everywhere there is confusion. This is a world in which brothers become lovers, husbands are surrogate fathers, and (viz the awful Hugh) fathers see their daughters half as wives. Every family role is up for grabs. Everyone is trying to define himself or herself and every relationship is in need of a new name. The period may be 1945, but it is also now. By the time Ian Brown's cast reprise the odd lullaby that gives the play its title — "lay your head upon your pillow, don't be a kid or a weeping willow" — I felt I had seen the personal uncertainties of our era in fascinating microcosm.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

This hits the black spot

Treasure Island
Lyric, Hammersmith

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON's ripping yarn has sent generations of children to bed with visions of swarthy pirates and parrots squawking "pieces of eight". Neil Bartlett transposes the novel to the stage with wit and flair without losing the sense or language of the original.

Set in the cavernous belly of the ship that takes our adventurers to Treasure Island, Bartlett uses Victorian sea shanties to capture the rough magic of a tale that is more than just the legend of Old Flint's booty, and characters such as scar-faced Captain Bill who drinks himself into a stroke in the first half.

It is young Jim Hawkins's dreams that make this the awfully big adventure it turns out to be. Indeed, he's lowered on stage asleep on a table suspended from the rafters. With a touch of flickering green light on the canvas sails, Angela Davies's set plunges us among the ghosts of pirates at the bottom of the sea. They wear hoops in their ears, have gaps where teeth should be and do choruses of juicy "aargghhs". Andrew Fielding's psychopathic Blind Pew, with his purple shades and white stick, can hear a finger stirring long before the blade has been drawn.

You can almost smell the salt spray as the ship gets going and the cast start listing in time to *Fifteen Men on a Dead Man's Chest*, sung a cappella by the crew of pirates recruited by Tristan Sharps's witless do-gooder, Squire Trelawney, who has Flint's treasure map. There are no pretty voices here. Wrapped in a velvet coat, his left leg tied up under him, Tom Georgeson's major feat of the evening as Long John Silver is that he doesn't break his neck negotiating the steep rake.

Bartlett's production handles more death than most parents might feel comfortable with. Despite the fact that there's not much menace, and less myth, around Silver, there is still plenty of talk of slitting throats and hangman's ropes. Death proves to be the main protagonist in Hawkins's rites of passage. To my mind that's what's so good about the production. It works against the grain of Stevenson's Calvinist tendencies. It is the light-fingered way the cast go about their dastardly business that gives Bartlett's production its mustard. That and the wonderfully daring pauses where you can let your imagination work. It shivers the timbers.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

Birthpangs of age

The Chirpaun
Peacock, Dublin

CHIRPAUN is as good a word as any to describe what 17-year-old Jacinta is carrying in her womb. There are certainly less mysterious, less gentle ones that some might use for the unborn child whose father Jacinta refuses to name, despite constant pressure from her ageing male relatives.

The world into which this child will be born is an unpleasant, decayed place, peopled with young girls and old men who have become, it seems, demented with lust for them. The only exception is a sleek, young hypnotist (Pat Kinevane) who offers quasi-religious therapy to dramatist Tom MacIntyre's dangerously unbalanced community. In this dysfunctional milieu, the arrival of a child can only lead to further problems.

MacIntyre has always broken free of familiar dramatic structure. Actions arrive out of sequence, apparently displaced by events we can barely begin to understand.

It is a risky approach, but one that has, in the past, paid off magnificently, most recently with his *Good Evening Mr Collins*. In *The Chirpaun*, he has run aground. Instead of springy, poetic ambiguity, Kathy McArdle's production offers confusion.

MacIntyre pushes and pulls his language in strange directions, to unconvincing and often grating effect. The trinity of young girls that Jacinta (Eva Birthistle) creates with Dolores (Renée Weldon) and Clodagh (Pauline Hutton) never falls into a natural rhythm and is consequently always difficult to watch.

Tom Hickey, as Jacinta's hyperactive father, and Bosco Hogan, as his drinking partner, provide more middle-aged angst than any production could happily sustain. Des Keogh makes an energetic attempt at Jacinta's eccentric grandpa, on an endless tour of the island. No amount of travelling, however, is enough to escape from the fact that this Chirpaun is having a difficult gestation.

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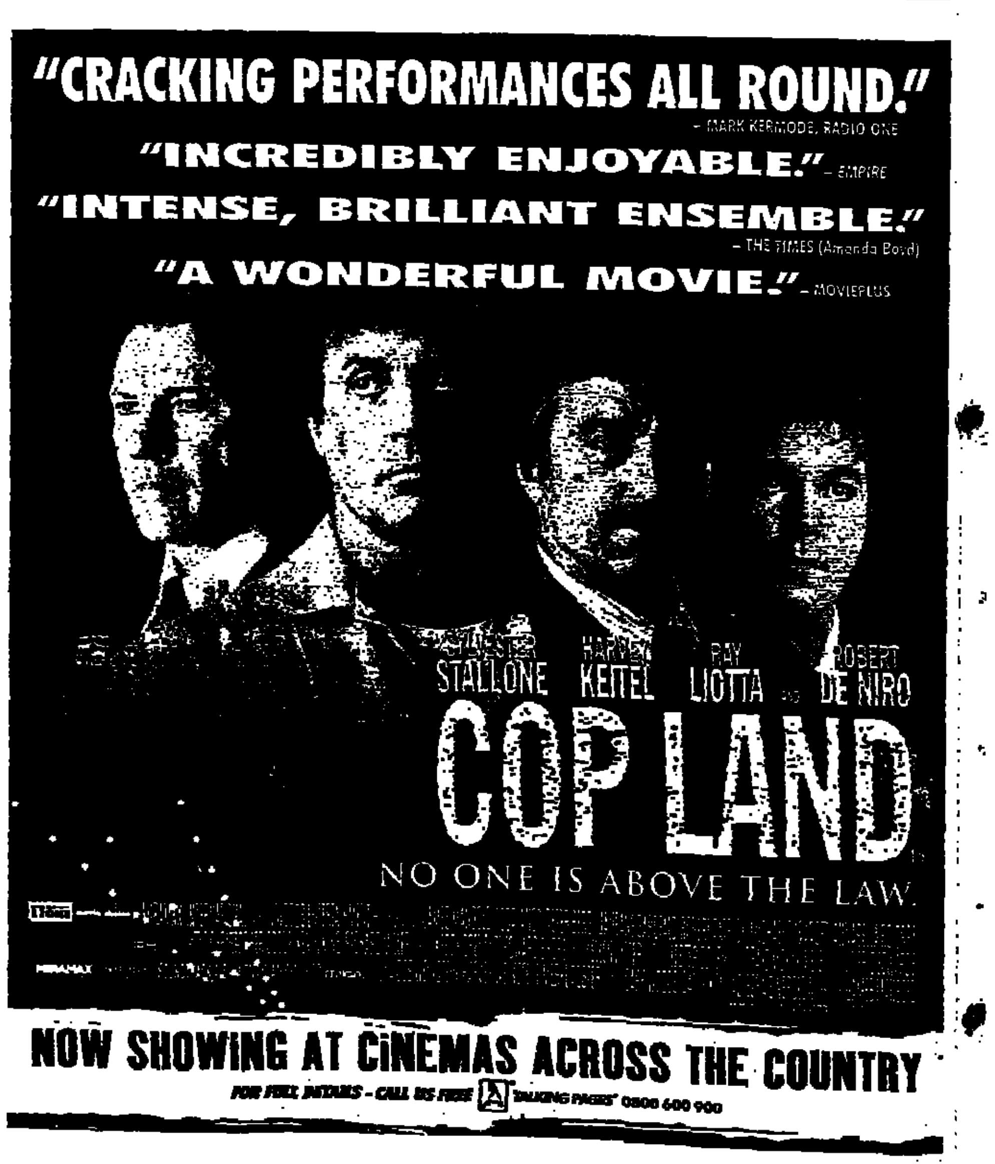
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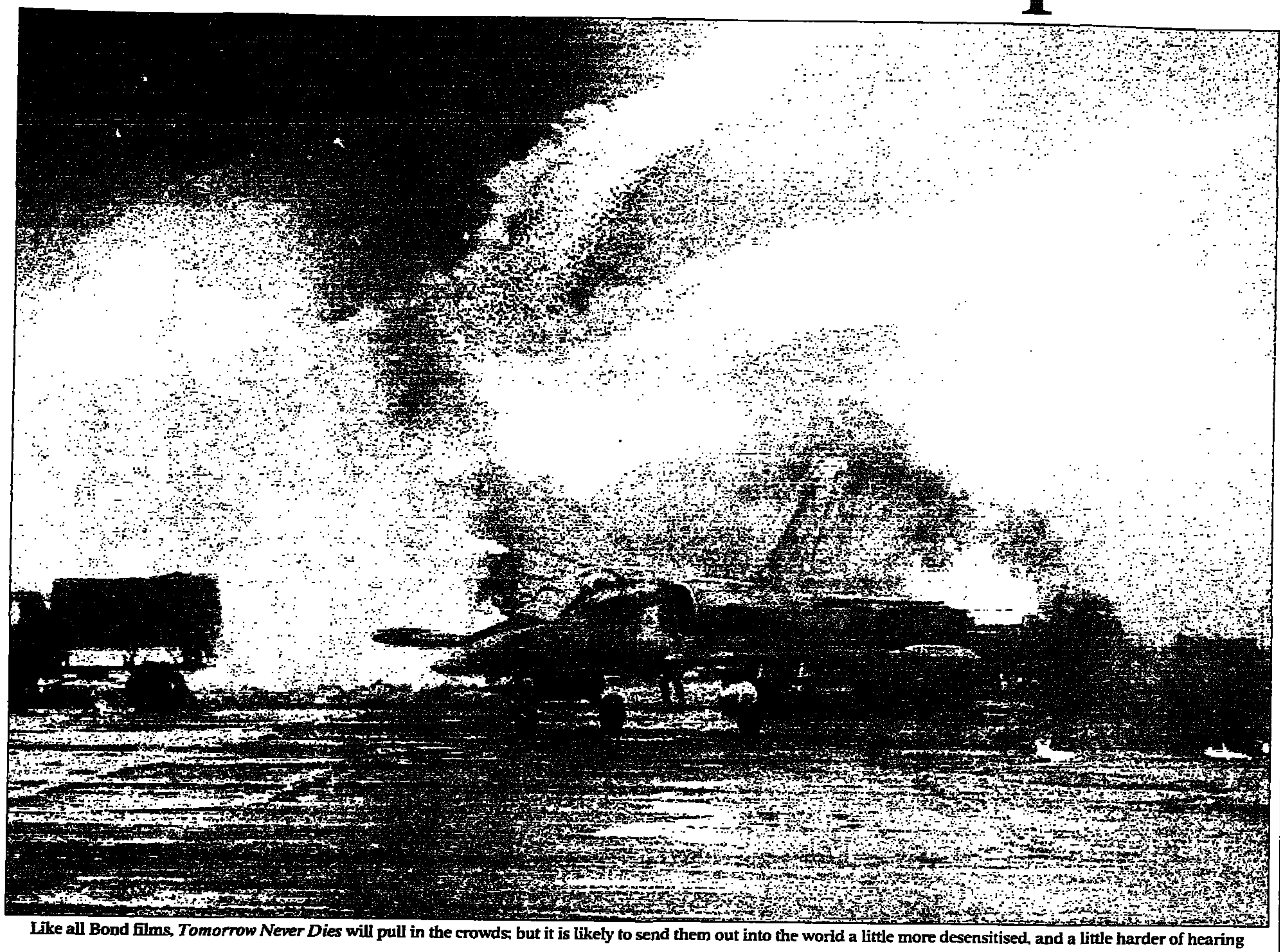
NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown sees 007's self-mockery disappear in a welter of bad jokes and big bangs

Bond's licence to thrill expires



Like all Bond films, *Tomorrow Never Dies* will pull in the crowds; but it is likely to send them out into the world a little more desensitised, and a little harder of hearing

The master of gadgetry, Q, sighs. "Grow up, 007," he says after Bond has sent his new customised car whizzing round Hamburg airport's runway with a few twiddles of a remote-control handset. A mature James Bond? Fat chance, least of all in **Tomorrow Never Dies**, a film that somehow manages to take all the twinkle from Pierce Brosnan's successful impersonation in *GoldenEye* and throw it away. True to his vocation, the world's most famous secret agent is never too far from a gun, a girl, or a martini, shaken but not stirred. That self-mocking air, though, is barely visible.

Perhaps it became swamped by the script's lame and juvenile jokes (bear in mind that Bruce Feirstein, the writer, is the author of the humorous book *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*). Perhaps Brosnan was exhausted by a hard year spent battling volcanoes (*Dante's Peak*), Barbra Streisand (*The Mirror Has Two Faces*) and little green men (*Mars Attacks!*). Even superstars need holidays.

The familiar outline of the Bond adventures brings its own perils. True, Bond watchers can relish the recurring characters, the in-jokes, the latest weapons concealed in brand-name cigarette lighters and wristwatches. But as the years advance and world politics change it becomes harder to give a Bond adventure genuine momentum, or shape villains with a cutting edge.

When Bond first faces the latest ogre, one Elliot Carver, a crazed media mogul played by Jonathan Pryce, he is asked for his name. James Bond, he replies. Carver has genuinely never heard of him, which does not say much for the man's knowledge of the world. Doesn't Carver read his own newspapers, or go to the movies? Maybe the mogul was too busy empire-building.

After enduring the silly title song — sung, just about, by Sheryl Crow — we first find our villain engineering a conflict between the Chinese and a British frigate in the China seas. Then we see him magisterial at his Hamburg power base: grey hair, rimless glasses, clothes Bertolt Brecht might fancy. It is fun at first as Carver hatches malevolent plans to spread bug-infested software and boost his ratings by starting the next world war.

But boredom sets in; the performance never develops. Bond himself springs no surprises, and neither of the film's female leads, Hong Kong action star Michelle Yeoh and Teri Hatcher, TV's Lois Lane, could be said to be a dream date.

But what of the action? For some of the time, Roger Spottiswoode and his second unit director Vic Armstrong deliver enough slam, bang and wallop to keep us chewing the popcorn. The best setpiece is Bond's escape from the car park at Carver's Hamburg HQ, spinning the vehicle up and down the ramps as he crouches in the back, dodging bullets. If the excitement is genuine, the setting is not: the sequence was staged at the Brent Cross multi-storey car park in North London.

Elsewhere, the film slips too easily into the kind of destruction and carnage that bludgeons the viewer. Guns are fired indiscriminately. Yeoh, a post-feminist warrior introduced to keep Bond up to date, unleashes a thousand kicks. Occasionally, the violence is played for laughs (as with Vincent Schiavelli's torture specialist, Dr Kaufman); too often it is thoughtlessly thrust in our faces, with no lively characterisations to distract us.

Like all Bond films *Tomorrow Never Dies* (a meaningless title if ever there was one) will pull in the crowds; but it is likely to send them out into the world a little more desensitised, and a little harder of hearing.

I Know What You Did Last Summer is no brain feast either, although you can see interesting elements coursing through the script, penned by the author of *Scream*, Kevin Williamson.

Once again his subject is terrorised youth. Four friends in Southport, North Carolina, celebrate the end of their high school days by driving along the winding coast road, well lubricated, and hitting a stray human, who seems dead. Julie (Jennifer Love Hewitt) insists they call the police. But other voices prevail. "This is your future, Julie, think about it," says the cocky Barry (Ryan Philippe). So they push the body off a pier, see it flicker briefly back to life, and watch their future ruined by guilt.

A few speeches here and there raise the topic of facing the consequences of one's actions. Elsewhere we glimpse a class war raging: the car's driver, played by Freddie Prinze Jr., feels on the fringe because he is working-class. The setting itself, a seaside village, creates quite an impression with its beauty contests and unfashionable shops, small horizons and petty jealousies: Williamson, from North Carolina himself, clearly knows the territory.

But the horror movie is a bloodthirsty beast that must be fed corpses. So the film gradually slides into the familiar rut, helped on its way by a threatening letter — "I know what you did last summer!" — and a menacing figure in fisherman's gear and gleaming hook, who would like to do to the youth of Southport what Freddy Krueger did to Elm Street.

Jim Gillespie, a British television director now making the leap into features, handles the scares fluently enough, but there is nothing distinctive to make the viewer sit up.

Still, his cast adds lustre. Barely out of their teens themselves, the main quartet vigorously punch home their characters' moods. Hewitt is particularly striking as Julie, the bright girl who crumples under the weight of guilt. Prinze also shines as Ray, the thoughtful working-class lad, subject of taunts and suspicions. Anne Heche, too, makes the most of two edgy scenes as the dead body's unhinged sister. Performances like these could have lifted the film into another realm. But it rests content with smaller ambitions, delivering enough thrills to keep teenage audiences ticking over before the onset of *Scream 2*.

I Know What You Did has an obvious target audience. But who is **A Further Gesture** meant for? The title alone does not invite long box-office queues. And the material has that worthy air often met in films bankrolled by Channel 4. An escaped IRA prisoner on the run with fading ideals. An uncertain new life in the seedy side of Manhattan. Shelter found with Guatemalan exiles, among them the ubiquitous Alfred Molina. A blossoming romance. A conflict of interests when the exiles plan an assassination. To make matters gloomier, the lead role is played by Stephen Rea, looking more like a bedraggled bloodhound than ever.

For all that, time is not wasted watching *A Further Gesture*. Robert Dornhelm, a most wayward director of Romanian birth and Viennese training, invests Ronan Bennett's script with an expressive urgency that recalls his best film, *Requiem for Dominic*. You can feel the unfriendliness and cold in these New York streets, cluttered with snow; sniff the fear and anger in the transient hotel, where Rea receives a stab wound after intervening in a domestic squabble.

Rosina Pastor (from *Land and Freedom*) injects warmth as the Guatemalan revolutionary who helps nurse him back to health; Jorge Sanz raises the temperature, too, as her fiery comrade. Hidden under the grey cloak of *A Further Gesture*, in fact, lies an eloquent, human drama.

Eloquence, sadly, is not enough in the hurried weeks before Christmas. Audiences want oomph. So the eye might wander to **Persons Unknown** with its promise of crime, sex, and duplicity, and a cast that includes tasty names such as Joe Mantegna, Kelly Lynch and J. T. Walsh. Some might even be drawn by the director, George Hickenlooper: one half of the team responsible for *Heart of Darkness*, the engrossing documentary about the making of *Apocalypse Now*.

But oomph is not what we get as Mantegna's ex-cop and two opportunistic sisters get their fingers burnt trying to steal from drug dealers. Hickenlooper shuffles the genre ingredients with modest competence, but we have been over this territory too often recently for competence to be sufficient. Minutes after the screening was over, I had trouble remembering what I had seen.

Tomorrow Never Dies
Odeon Leicester Square
12, 119 mins
Pierce Brosnan returns, minus twinkle

I Know What You Did Last Summer
Warner West End
18, 101 mins
More screams from the author of Scream

A Further Gesture
ABC Piccadilly
15, 95 mins
Something worthy from Channel 4

Persons Unknown
Metro, 18, 109 mins
Crime thriller gets stuck in familiar territory

Why we vote for Eastwood

NEW ON VIDEO

■ **ABSOLUTE POWER**
Columbia TriStar, 15, 1997
CLINT EASTWOOD'S burglar becomes a hit squad's target after witnessing the President's mistress being shot by Secret Service men. For all the film's modern cynicism about politicians, this is at heart a vintage potboiler recast as a slick star vehicle. Once again Eastwood plays the skilled loner who outfoxes his opponents. We have also seen Gene Hackman's oily operator before — he plays the President — but it is still delicious watching him squirm. Improbabilities pile up, but we excuse them: a tribute to Eastwood's power as actor, icon and director. A rental release.

■ **BIG NIGHT**
Columbia TriStar, 15, 1996
ACTORS Campbell Scott and Stanley Tucci joined forces to direct this friendly low-budget film about trials and tribulations at an Italian restaurant run by immigrant brothers in 1950s New Jersey. The eldest (Tony Shalhoub) is an artist in pasta who refuses to compromise quality. The other (Tucci) has a bigger itch for success in the New World. The material is over-stretched and visual interest is comparatively low; but just feel the tender regard for human weakness. A rental release.

■ **MARVIN'S ROOM**
Buena Vista, 12, 1997
DIANE KEATON has spent her life caring for her bedridden father, Hume Cronyn. Now she needs a bone marrow transplant to combat her own leukaemia. So down to Florida comes sister Meryl Streep, Leonardo DiCaprio, and a host of complications. Scott McPherson's script (from his play) has its arch moments, but there are still plenty of home truths in this semi-comic portrait of family members fighting their failings and finding strength in adversity. A rental release.

■ **MON HOMME**
Artificial Eye, 18, 1996
THE French director Bertrand Blier has a persistent need to shock the bourgeois with sexual games. So here is his latest muse, Anouk Grinberg, as a happy hooker so enraptured by sex with a tramp found near her garbage that she invites him to be her pimp. Social comment rears its head when the tramp (Gérard Lanvin) lands in jail. Mostly outlandish comedy prevails. The cast is sprinkled with notable names, but they are never enough to ward off the feeling that Blier is cocking snooks that he has cocked many times before. Available to rent and buy.

■ **TALKING HEADS**
BBC, PG, 1987
VIOLENCE: none. Sex/nudity: some mild references. Language: occasional, mild. Such are some of the indications given to potential viewers on the sleeve of this video, the first to feature Alan Bennett's wonderful series of monologues. Mildness, of course, is Bennett's stock in trade, although his habitual understatement should not blind us to the weight of tragedy in these glimpses of ordinary, lonely lives. The talking heads belong to Patricia Routledge, Maggie Smith, Stephanie Cole, Julie Walters, Thora Hird and Bennett himself.

GEOFF BROWN

BRIEFLY NOTED

Winnie's canvases

PAINTING: Fifty years after his election as an Honorary Academician Extraordinary by the Royal Academy, Sir Winston Churchill's art is going on display in London. Sotheby's will exhibit more than 100 paintings by the statesman from January 5 to 17. Churchill only started painting when he was 40, but he then pursued the passion avidly for the next 50 years. The exhibition gathers paintings from private collections, and also reconstructs Churchill's studio at Chartwell.

MUSICALS: Following the successful transfer of *Grease* from screen to stage, another John Travolta vehicle is set to hit the West End boards in the spring. Twenty-one years after the release of the movie version, *Saturday Night Fever* will open as a stage show at the London Palladium on May 5. Robert Stigwood is producing Arlene Phillips's £4 million staging, for which the Bee Gees (composers of the original score) are supplying two new songs.

THEATRE: After welcoming shows by such giants of modern theatre as Ninagawa, Twyla Tharp, Robert Wilson and Merce Cunningham, the Barbican Theatre will play host to another living legend next summer. Postman Pat, the Mr Charisma of the Royal Mail, will be starring in his own show. It is part of the Barbican's attempt to revamp its appeal to the toddling classes.

MUSIC: Extensive plans have been announced for a year of celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of George Gershwin's birth, which will fall on September 26, 1998. The most important event will be the opening next March of a George and Ira Gershwin Room at the Library of Congress in Washington DC, which will showcase the Library's collection of Gershwin manuscripts. The big live event will be a Gershwin Centennial Gala at the Carnegie Hall next September.

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

GARLAND: *Gerry Gowans plays the* plucky, dancing, singing, iconic diva in her one-woman show, much praised at this year's Edinburgh Festival
New End, 27 New End, Hampstead, NW3 (0171-794 0022). Opens tonight, 9pm. Thurs-Sat, 9pm. *Until Jan 3* Ⓢ

MONTSERRAT CABALLE: The legendary Grand Dame of opera is joined by her namesake daughter, Montserrat Martí — also a soprano — in *a unique Christmas Concert* with the BBC Concert Orchestra, conducted by José Collado
Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm Ⓢ

SATURDAY NIGHT. World premiere of Sondheim's first musical, *and a coup for* the Bridewell. (The original was abandoned in the early 1950s when the producer died.) Set in Brooklyn in 1929: love v money, pretence v reality. Music and lyrics by Sondheim, book by Julius and Philip Epstein
Bridewell, Bride Lane, EC4 (0171-936 3456). Previews from tonight, 7.30pm. Opens Dec 17, 7.30pm. Then Tue-Sat, 7.30pm, mats Sat and Sun 3.30pm. *Until January 24*

THINK NO EVIL OF US: David Benson completes more than a year of touring his fascinating, semi-autobiographical biography of Kenneth Williams. Last chance to see this funny and poignant show
Lyric Studio, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 (0181-741 8701). Opens tonight, 8pm. Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4.30pm. Until January 10 Ⓢ

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The London Philharmonic Orchestra leaves its London base to give a concert which includes part of a programme heard last *night at the South Bank:* Mozart's Piano Concerto No 20 in D, with pianist Maria João Pires. The second half of the programme now offers Mahler's Fourth Symphony with soprano Janice Watson as soloist in the vocal finale. Bernard Haitink, renowned for his authoritative direction of Mahler, conducts.
Symphony Hall, Broad Street (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 8pm Ⓢ

CARDIFF: Monteverdi's last opera, the *Coronation of Poppea*, returns to **Welsh National Opera**'s repertory in a new production by the radical American director David Alden. Rising soprano Catrin Wyn Davies sings the role of the courtesan Poppea, with Paul Nilon as her lover, the Emperor Nero, and Sally Burgess as his Empress. The Baroque repertoire specialist Rinaldo Alessandrini conducts.
New Theatre, Park Place (01222 878889). Tonight and Sat, 7.15pm. Ⓢ

EDINBURGH: An array of splendid soloists joins the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** *and the SCO Chorus in a* concert here. Catherine Wyn-Rogers and Timothy Robinson are among the singers in a programme of music by Mozart which includes *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*, the *Magic Flute Overture* and the *Coronation Mass*. Ion Marin conducts.
Queen's Hall, Clerk Street (0131-668 2019). Tonight, 7.45pm

SHEFFIELD: In **My Fair Lady** David *Suffin directs Clive Carter and Sarah* Jane Hassell as professor and guinea-pig in the tune-packed Lerner/Loewe musical.
Crucible Theatre, Norfolk Street, Sheffield (0114 2769922). Previews tonight, 7.30pm. Opens tomorrow, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats most Tue, Wed, Thur, 2.30pm. Until January 17. Ⓢ

Montserrat Caballé sings in the Festival Hall

LONDON GALLERIES

Barbican: James Ensor (0171-638 8891) . . **British Museum:** Cartier 1900-1939 (0171-323 8525) . . **Design Museum:** A tour of bicycle design history (0171-378 6055) . . . **Fine Art Society:** Glyn Philpot, RA (0171-629 5116) . . **Hayward:** Objects of Desire (0171-928 3144) . . **National:** Making and Meaning: Holbein's Ambassadors (0171-747 2885) . . **National Portrait:** John Kobal Photographic Portrait Award 1997 (0171-306 0055) . . **Royal Academy:** Victorian Fairy Painting (0171-439 7438) . . **Serpentine:** Piero Manzoni (0171-402 6075) . . **Tate:** Turner on the Loire (0171-887 8000) . . **V & A:** Spanish Treasures from the Khalili Collection (0171-938 8349/8441)

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

■ **House full, returns only**
◪ **Some seats available**
☐ **Seats at all prices**

☐ ***THE CASTLE SPECTRE.*** M. G. "Monk" Lewis's most popular play: iron-hearted peer, abducted heroine rescued from ghosts. "Extremely licentious, dangerously radical," said The Times in 1797. Ted Craig directs Phil Willmott's adaptation
Warehouse, Dingwall Rd, East Croydon (0181-680 4060). Tue, 6.30pm, Wed-Sat, 8pm. Sun (from Jan 4), 5pm

■ **CHICAGO**: Revised version of the celebrated Kander & Ebb musical *directed by Walter Bobbie. A multi-Tony* winner on Broadway last year. Starring Ruthie Henshall, Ute Lemper, Henry Goodman and Nigel Planer
Adelphi, Strand, London WC2 (0171-344 0055). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mats Wed *and Sat 2.30pm.* Ⓢ

☐ **CHICKS WITH FLICKS**: Jackie Clune's impressive (and doubtless camp) musical tribute to the disco divas of the 70s. Her impersonation of Karen Carpenter is said to be flawless
King's Head, Upper Street, N1 (0171-226 1916). Tue-Thur, 8pm, Fri and Sat, 7pm and 9pm. Sun, 3.30pm Ⓢ

☐ **CYRANO DE BERGERAC**: The sell-out RSC production from Stratford, *with Antony Sher as Rostand's tragic* romantic hero, in London for a limited season. Gregory Doran directs
Lyric, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5054). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Wed and Sat, 2pm

☐ **DAVID COPPERFIELD**: Matthew Francis adapts and directs the Dickens tale for his last production as Artistic Director. Damien Matthews plays David. Transfers to the Crucible, Sheffield, in January
Greenwich, Crooms Hill, SE10 (0181-858 7755). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm, mid-week mats today, Dec 18, 2.30pm; Dec 22, 26, 27, 29, 3pm; Jan 15, 2.30pm. Until January 24. Ⓢ

◪ **FAME**: TV and film spin-off about young hopefuls from the New York *School of the Performing Arts. Touring* company in London for ten weeks
Victoria Palace, Victoria St, SW1 (0171-834 1317). Mon-Thur, 7.30pm; Fri, 5.30pm and 8pm; Sat, 3pm and 7.30pm. Until Jan 17

☐ **HRH**: Corin Redgrave and Amanda Donohue play the Duke and Duchess of Windsor in another stage version of their doings. Simon Callow directs
Playhouse, Northumberland Ave, WC2 (0171-839 4401). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mats Thur and Sat, 3pm. Ⓢ

☐ **LEONCE AND LENA**: The weakest of Büchner's three plays: a prince sighs for a princess and talks fey. David Farr directs Lee Hall's new version, done as a *musical*
Gate Theatre, Prince Albert Pub, 11 Pembridge Road, W11 (0171-229 0706). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm. Until Dec 20

☐ **A LETTER OF RESIGNATION.** Edward Fox and Clare Higgins play Harold Macmillan and Lady Dorothy in Hugh Whitemore's play about the effects of the Profumo scandal
Comedy Theatre, Panton Street, SW1 (0171-369 1731). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mats Wed, 3pm and Sat, 4pm.

☐ **SCISSOR HAPPY**: Comedy whodunnit where the audience can play detective. Adapted by Neil Mullarkey, Lee Simpson and Robert Harley from the US long-runner *Shear Madness*.
Duchess, Catherine Street, WC2 (0171-494 5075). Mon-Fri, 8pm; Sat, 5.30pm and 8.30pm; mat Wed, 2.30pm.

☐ **THEATRE IN THE TIME OF THE GENERALS**: Four short Argentinian plays, written in opposition to the Junta dictatorship, and part of the movement *that contributed to its fall.* Colin Ellwood directs all four on the one evening. The authors are Carlos Somigliana, Eduardo Pavlovsky, Mauricio Kartun and Roberto Cossa.
Finborough Theatre Club, 118 Finborough Road, SW10 (0171-373 3842). Tue-Sat, 7.30pm; Sun, 4pm.

LONG RUNNERS

☐ **Blood Brothers**: Phoenix (0171-369 1733) . . ☐ **The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)**: Criterion (0171-369 1737) . . ◪ **An Inspector Calls**: Garrick (0171-494 5085) . . ☐ **Jesus Christ Superstar**: Lyceum (0171-656 1807) . . ☐ **Martin Guerre**: Prince Edward *(0171-447 5400)* . . ◪ **Les Misérables**: Palace (0171-434 0909) . . ◪ **Oliver!**: Palladium (0171-494 5020) . . ■ **The Phantom of the Opera**: Her Majesty's (0171-494 5400)

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre.

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol ◆) on release across the country

NEW RELEASES

◆ **THE BORROWERS** (U): Minuscule scavengers fight for their home. Exhilarating family film, much adapted from the children's classic. With John Goodman, Jim Broadbent. Director, Peter Hewitt.
Barbican Ⓢ (0171-638 8891) **Odeons: Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Plaza** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgin Trocadero** Ⓢ (0181-970 6015) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343)

◆ **COP LAND** (15): Lazy sheriff ponders what to do about corrupt cops. Flawed but absorbing drama, with Sylvester Stallone, Harvey Keitel, Robert De Niro. Director, James Mangold.
Greenwich (0181-235 3005) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Plaza** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen/Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **Screen/Green** (0171-226 3520) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** Ⓢ (0181-970 6015) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343)

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (U): Frank Capra's American classic, revived in a new print. With James Stewart as the doubting do-gooder
Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3323) ***Curzon West End*** *(0171-369 1722)*

MARIUS ET JEANNETTE (15): Life and love in Marseilles. Inconsequential concoction, weak on plot, strong on local colour. Director, Robert Guédiguian
ABC Swiss Centre (0171-439 4470)

PARADISE ROAD (15): Women PoWs in Sumatra keep up their courage by forming a choir. Reasonably uplifting drama, with Glenn Close and Pauline Collins. Director, Bruce Beresford.
ABC Shaftesbury Av *(0171-836 6279)*

THIS WORLD, THEN THE FIREWORKS (18): Callous, over-stylised film noir about twin siblings in crime, with Billy Zane and Gina Gershon. Director, Michael Oblowitz.
ABC Piccadilly (0171-437 3561)

CURRENT

LAWN DOGS (15): Two outsiders form a dangerous friendship in Kentucky. Imaginative drama, with strong performances by young Mischa Barton and Sam Rockwell. Director, John Duigan.
ABC Swiss Centre (0171-439 4470)

THE MYTH OF FINGERPRINTS (15): Drama about a dysfunctional family, with good scenes, a good cast, but a hollow centre. Bart Freundlich directs Roy Scheider, Blythe Danner and Julianne Moore
ABCs: Baker Street (0171-935 9772) **Tottenham Ct Rd** (0171-636 6148)

ONE NIGHT STAND (18): Absorbing study in infidelity and its aftermath. Excellent performances from Wesley Snipes, Nastassja Kinski, Robert Downey Jr. and Kyle MacLachlan. *Writer-director, Mike Figgis.*
Barbican Ⓢ (0171-638 8891) **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **Gate** Ⓢ (0171-727 4043) **Odeon Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Plaza** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Richmond** (0181-332 0030) ***Ritzy*** *(0171-737 2121)* **Screen/Hill** Ⓢ (0171-435 3366) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgin Trocadero** Ⓢ (0181-970 6015) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343)

THE TANGO LESSON (PG): A film director learns to tango. Brave and enticing film by the director of *Orlando*, Sally Potter, who co-stars with Pablo Veron.
Chelsea (0171-351 3742) **Odeon Mezzanine** Ⓢ (0181-315 4215) **Renoir** (0171-837 8402)

UNDER THE SKIN (18): Powerful, edgy British first feature exploring the shockwaves of grief. With Samantha Morton. Director, Carine Adler.
ABC Piccadilly *(0171-437 3561)* **Metro** (0171-437 0757) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121)

◆ **WELCOME TO SARAJEVO** (15): Striking British account of reporters covering the civil war in 1992, based on Michael Nicholson's experiences. With Stephen Dillane. Director, Michael Winterbottom
ABC Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343)

Our critics select the opera, orchestral, choral and vocal discs they have most enjoyed this year

Best classical CDs of 1997

Puccini's **La rondine** (EMI 7243 5 56338 2) was the clear opera set of the year. The score, too long condemned as second-rate and trivial by those none too familiar with it, was overdue for revival. Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna were ideally matched to breathe fresh life into it as the courtesan and the gauche boy who fall in love at first sight, much like Violetta and Alfredo in *Traviata*. Antonio Pappano is the magician-conductor who escorts them, and the LSO, through the lilting score with its waltzes that sum up pleasure-seeking Paris. *La Bohème* was not Puccini's only evocation of that city.

Verdi's **I Lombardi**, too, was overdue a new recording, and Decca's version (455 287-2) finds James Levine and his Metropolitan Opera forces on top form. Pavarotti is the main selling point, although Oronte, the tenor lead, does not appear in Act I and is relegated to being a mere "vision" by the last act. In between times he dominates the set, culminating in the great trio where Oronte converts to Christianity. In the end the crusaders from Lombardy take over and set about founding the new Jerusalem in blazing style.

There is plenty of fire too, including the Immolation Scene from *Götterdämmerung*, in **Waltraud Meier Sings Wagner** (RCA 09026 68766), best recital record of 1997. Lorin Maazel, absent from the opera for some time as far as recordings are concerned, makes a vivid and vibrant return with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra. His partnership with Meier may have been forged in the studio, but carries all the throb of the theatre. *Meier's voice now commands total* Wagnerian authority, and it matters not whether she is recalling her mezzo days as Kundry or shining bright in Elisabeth's greeting from *Tannhäuser*.

JOHN HIGGINS

Fizzing with success: Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu excelled as the lovers in Puccini's *La rondine*

In this year of multiple **Sibelius** cycles, Finland's Lahti Symphony Orchestra has not only contributed its own recordings of the symphonies to the catalogue but also, under its *conductor Osmo Vänskä, released an* invaluable world premiere recording of the complete *Karelia* music (BIS CD915). Sibelius's incomplete parts have been artfully reconstructed by Lahti's composer-in-residence, Kalevi Aho; and the casting of two folksingers for the ancient runic songs in the first tableau adds to an already distinctive palette. The disc also offers the first ever recording of the original theatre version of the incidental music to Arvid Järnefelt's play *Kuolema* (Death), with the *spooky original Valse triste*.

Almost every one of the handful of discs released by the discriminating Munich-based label ECM New Series *qualifies for consideration as a record* of the year. I have particularly enjoyed **György and Márta Kurtág's** playful piano recital of Kurtág's own *Games* (*Játékok*), interspersed thoughtfully with a patterning of Bach transcriptions (ECM 1619 453 511-2). The piano playing of the Hungarian composer and his wife is a constant delight.

Finally, two outstanding song recitals. **Matthias Goerne's** *Winterreise* is the latest volume in The Hyperion Schubert Edition (CDJ 33030): *Goerne, who sings as if* possessed by this great songcycle, is accompanied by both the piano playing and the comprehensive notes of Graham Johnson — and it's fascinating to see how one now nurtures the other. And then **Thomas Hampson's** bracing programme of settings of the poetry of Walt Whitman (EMI CDC 55028): some wonderful discoveries here from Vaughan Williams to Michael Tilson Thomas, accompanied by Craig Rutenberg, and complete with a *reading or two by Hampson himself.*

HILARY FINCH

Those for whom the sombre heroics of a Horowitz or a Richter are essential in **Rachmaninov** will not warm to this disc of the Piano Concertos Nos 2 and 3 played by the Japanese pianist Noriko Ogawa on BIS (CD 900). But what Ogawa brings instead is a soft-grained lyricism and a truly poetic response.

Nor is she lacking in the virtuosity department; indeed, she offers the more taxing of Rachmaninov's alternative cadenzas in No 3. But rather than thunder her way through these *warhorses, she brings out their subtle* Chopinesque qualities. Owain Arwel Hughes proves a sympathetic accompanist, bringing a commendable freshness to both works with his Malmo Symphony Orchestra forces.

The music of the Finnish composer **Rautavaara** is gradually penetrating the consciousness of British audiences, and enthralling them. The disc *Angels and Visitations* (Ondine ODE 881-2) is good value as it brings together three fine works. The title piece, from *Rautavaara's Angel Series, builds to* climaxes as emotionally complex as they are ravishingly beautiful. *The Isle of Bliss* is linked thematically to Rautavaara's latest opera, *Aleksis Kivi*, and the Violin Concerto offers the accomplished Elmar Oliveira soaring above some entrancing soundscapes.

HK Gruber's *Frankenstein!!* (EMI 5 56441 2), described by the composer as "a Pan-demonium for chansonnier and ensemble after children's rhymes by H.C.Artmann", is both grisly and bizarre, and altogether an extraordinary conception. The poems delight in demystifying popular heroes: Robinson Crusoe is revealed to have canni*balistic tendencies*, while Batman and Robin "still lie in their bed . . . coffee is on, and it's breakfast for two". There are monsters afoot too, and here one senses a sinister satirical undertow, which is never made explicit.

The score is often hilarious but Gruber's own delivery, a tour de force of vocal gymnastics, reinforces the underlying seriousness. Franz Welser-Möst is the excellent conductor. In lighter mood are Gruber's *Three Mob Pieces*, including a witty conflation of *Beatles and Brandenburg Concertos*.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Ribald romp with a count

OPERA ON VIDEO

■ **ROSSINI**
Le Comte Ory
Glyndebourne Festival Opera
Warner 0630 18646-3 ★★★

EXPERT direction by Brian Large, with much use of close-up, makes Rossini's comedy even more enjoyable on screen *than in the theatre. Annick* Massis's Countess Adèle was always going to be one of the performances of the year, limpidly sung, constantly gracious, but always hinting that she might just be susceptible if the right male comes along. Given a couple more years of experience Diana Montague's disarmingly roguish page, Isolier, could be just that. Marc Laho is no more than adequate in the title role, although he has fun turning Ory, disguised as a holy hermit in Act I, into a randy Maharishi. Ribald jokes from *Jérôme Savary's staging*, burnished sets from Toffoluti and top-class conducting from Andrew Davis.

■ **MOZART**
Die Entführung
Covent Garden Opera
Warner 0630 18773-3 ★★

ELIJAH MOSHINSKY's production, filmed in 1988, took Mozart's early opera very seriously and set it handsomely. Timothy O'Brien provided *the sunlit Turkish garden and* Sidney Nolan the striking dropcloths. On video the action runs without a break through a single day from the arrival of Belmonte (Deon Van Der Walt, clean tenor and dull actor) to his pardon by Pasha Selim (Oliver Tobias, grave and handsome). Inga Nielsen is not the only Konstanze to find the Act II arias taxing and she could do with a bit more passion in *Martern aller Arten*. But there is a glorious fork-bearded Osmin from Kurt Moll and the considerable bonus of Solti savouring *both the jokes and the sentimentality* of a score not usually associated with him.

■ **PUCCINI**
Manon Lescaut
Glyndebourne Festival Opera
Warner 0630 18647-3 ★

ONE of Glyndebourne's rare duds. Richard Hudson's empty stage and Graham Vick's equally empty staging desperately needed some star performances to bolster them and the cast is not up to it. Adina Nitescu in the title role improves as Manon's brief life runs fast downhill, but she is never convincing as the convent-bound ingenue of Act I. Patrick Denniston is vocally strained and dramatically *charmless as Des Grieux. Best* contributions come from Roberto di Candia as Lescaut and Paolo Montarsolo as Géronte. John Eliot Gardiner, who can usually handle anything operatic, sounds ill at ease conducting Puccini.

JOHN HIGGINS

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THE WASTE LAND
Dir by **DEBORAH WARNER**
Dec 14-22 & Dec 27-Jan 11
37 minutes at 7.30 & 8.45 pm
Sun perfs & 31 Dec at 5 & 7pm

WYNDHAMS 369 1736/344 4444
BEST COMEDY
Eve Standard Awards
BEST COMEDY
Laurence Olivier Awards
"ART"
MALCOLM STORRY
NIGEL HAVERS
RON COOK
A new play by Yasmina Reza
Trans by Christopher Hampton
Eves 8, Mats Wed 3, Sat & Sun 5
Xmas perfs 24 Dec 3, 26 Dec 5 & 8

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High priestess of soul looks back on anger

Nigel Williamson talks to Nina Simone, superstar of this weekend's Womad Festival. Plus (below) the lineup

There are things you dream about. Things like spending a sunlit December afternoon with Nina Simone in her villa in the south of France. When it is time to leave, she implores you to linger a little longer for a private mini-recital. She plays the first few bars of *Don't Explain*, flashes the most radiant smile and invites you to take photographs. Pinch me, someone.

And yet record producers, label executives, promoters and agents will tell you that this polite and friendly middle-aged woman sitting at her piano is the most difficult individual in show business. Her career has been littered with no-shows, walk-outs, fights and tantrums. The last time she was due to play in London she cancelled without notice because she was "distressed" over an injured dog. If it weren't for the simple fact that her voice possesses an intensity and emotion that touches pure genius, the world would have dismissed her as far too wayward long ago.

She has her own explanation for how she attracted such a prickly reputation: "If you're a black woman and you stand up for yourself people say you're difficult. It's so easy to say yes to everything. It's hard to say no, I'm not going to do that because I don't believe in it. They wouldn't say I was difficult if I was white and male."

The attitudes that made Simone were instilled early. "I was playing a piano recital at the local music library when I was 12 and they wanted my mother and father to sit at the back because they were black. That was the first time I met prejudice and the first time I stood up to it. I still haven't got over the shock yet."

Astonishingly, one of the greatest popular voices of the postwar era never wanted to play jazz and soul at all — or even to sing. Her ambition was to be the first black concert pianist in America. "I was classically trained for 22 years, but I was refused a scholarship because I was black. I was forced to go into showbiz to make a living and forced to sing to keep a job and I am still angry and bitter about it."

The nightclub owner in Atlantic City who told her 43 years ago that he would only employ her if she learnt to sing is one of the uncelebrated heroes of modern music. Without him there would have been no *Feeling Good*, no *My Baby Just Cares For Me*, no *Mississippi Goddam*. Take a bow, Harry Steward: We owe you.

The stories of the racism Simone encountered in the Deep South in her early years are graphically recounted in her autobiography, but she still talks about the incidents as if they happened yesterday. "I left America 25 years ago because I couldn't stand the prejudice. I'm still passionate and militant about it. I've been back a few times but every time the prejudice is worse so I don't go back any more."

> ‘I was forced to go into showbiz and forced to sing to keep a job’

Nevertheless, she is making a rare visit over Christmas to see her daughter perform in a play in Chicago. She will also look up her mother, now 96, a Methodist minister who still disapproves of her daughter playing the devil's music. "She wasn't happy with my career. She still doesn't like showbiz and she has only ever been to see me play twice."

After living in Liberia ("that's where I was most happy"), Switzerland, Egypt, Barbados and Amsterdam, Simone settled in France four years ago. She lives with "three gentlemen" — an assistant, a nurse and a bodyguard.

Her living room is festooned with trophies, resembling a shrine to her long career, and she eagerly tells you that she is a doctor of music (she hands you a little card that reads: "Dr Nina Simone") and that the writer Toni Morrison described her as "one of the icons of the 20th century". You could imagine her choosing eight of her own records on *Desert Island Discs*. She is also one of the few people who could get away with it — her motivation would be pride in the achievements of a black woman rather than a desire to boast.

If she chose other performers none of them would be contemporary. "I listen to Maria Callas and Paul Robeson every day when I wake up. Louis Armstrong, Lena Horne and Ella Fitzgerald I like a lot." Stevie Wonder is as modern as she gets and while she admires the aggressive attitude of young African-American street styles she has contempt for the music. "The civil rights movement is dead but at least the rappers are trying to repeat what we did. I approve of what they are trying to do but I don't approve of rap because it isn't music."

She claims a special affinity with Callas and talks about her incessantly. "She was a diva like I am and she died in a hotel room with her little dog. I hope I'm not forgotten and left alone like that." It is a rare and poignant moment of doubt, but when asked about the tragedy in her own life she brushes it aside. "I lost four children in miscarriages and there has been a lot of unhappiness. But there has been an equal amount of happiness. Not all of my songs are sad."

Eventually I summon up the courage to ask if she recognises any truth in her fierce image. "Darling, I am difficult. Very difficult. Can't you see?" she says, wearing her most formidable frown. Then she smiles sweetly at the joke. "Are we meant to believe that the militant has finally mellowed? Nope. You must have got me on a good day."

● *Nina Simone plays the Barbican on Sunday*

ALLAN TITMUSS

Had Nina Simone been given the chance, she would have been a concert pianist. Instead she sang the blues for the world

The Barbican becomes the Outback

Hail **Blekbala Mujik**. First time to Britain, and the buzz and bubble around them is stirring. This Aboriginal didgeridoo/dreamtime dance band from Gulin Gulin, Arnhem Land, Australia, look like being one of the daddies of Womad at the Barbican this weekend.

Their European debut last month at a Womad festival in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, was, by their own account, a ripper. "We were the highlight of the festival," says Peter Miller, lead guitarist, singer and Aboriginal rights campaigner. The band played at 3am to 25,000 Spaniards. "They *rocked* to our music," Miller says. "It blew us away. We didn't contemplate our music was going to be accepted. They shouted: 'More, more, more'. I said: 'I know you guys stay awake all night, but I'm an Aussie and I need some sleep.' "

With their country-rock storytell and dreamtime music, Blekbala Mujik have come from the end of the world to perform. "Our music is extracted from the earth," Miller says. "The song is our spirit. Dreamtime is our spirit. It's pure. We still maintain our roots."

"It's thrilling," says Thomas Brooman, Womad's artistic director. "They're from such a different cultural world. They travelled 300 miles just to get to their local airport, Darwin, and then crossed Australia to Sydney to fly to Europe. It's a chance for them to reach out, paint a few brushstrokes."

This is the second year Womad has set up camp at the vast and unfestival-like Barbican. "It isn't exactly natural soil in which to plant our little festival," Brooman says. "It works, though." About 8,000 people are expected to attend this weekend, the same number as last year, when the festival lasted three days.

A free music and workshop programme, in the foyer, will complement the headline acts. Besides Blekbala Mujik, excitement follows **Ghostland**, a London-based trance band playing in Britain for the first time. "I saw their first performance in Las Palmas," Brooman says. "It was a complete triumph, a treat. They've got a fantastic Arabic vocal section."

Musical purists will be masterclassing too. The virtuoso worth sniffing out is **Djivan Gasparyan**, one of Armenia's greatest musicians who plays the *duduk* (an Armenian oboe). "He's a complete master," Brooman says. "There're no also-rans, it's wall-to-wall quality." Such quality takes in Marie Daulne's French/Zaire a cappella singing with **Zap Mama**; big-noise Brazilian samba/ragga/toasting from **Inner Sense** and Somali nomadic blues with Maryam Mursal and **Waaberi**. And Thomas Brooman's own tip is **César Stroscio**, Paris-based Argentinian tango men who also work concertina-type instruments called *bandoneons*.

ALEX WIJERATNE

● *Womad is at the Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891) tomorrow and Sunday*

Dazzling triumph of techno dynamos

The Prodigy
SECC, Glasgow

The only Scottish date of the Prodigy's end-of-year tour took place on the same stage from which, two days earlier, Oasis had been bottled off. It might not have been an auspicious omen for the group, which has enough hassle of its own, what with the furore over the single *Smack my Bitch Up*, but the lords of British dance won over the less-than-capacity crowd at Glasgow's cavernous SECC almost immediately.

Surrounded entirely by banks of keyboards, with a dozen spotlights shining in his direction, songwriter Liam Howlett looked like some mad scientist obsessed with his invention. For several minutes he was alone on stage, while overhead cameras linked to two huge video screens observed in detail his every action. Even when the rest of the band did appear, its line-up augmented by a drummer and a guitarist, Howlett unusually remained the focus for the performance. Unlike Oasis, the Prodigy was clearly prepared to respond to the criticism that recent shows have suffered from familiarity.

The visual shift away from multi-pierced frontman Keith Flint was far from the only alteration to a stunning live act that has helped turn the Prodigy into the world's most successful techno outfit. Gone were the flamboyant dance routines seen at countless summer festivals and the cosy, sitting-room style set of last year's Christmas concert.

Instead, both Flint and fellow dancer Leeroy Thornhill were frequently noted only for their absence, while a stage designed to look like a steel cave had an alienating effect. In addition, rapper Maxim Reality dispensed with his irritating habit of attempting to interact with the audience.

Even the light show had been overhauled. Often, the auditorium was so dark that it was difficult to see, or blinding white beams made it impossible to look straight at the stage. Stripped down to its dual dynamics of rock and rave, the Prodigy recreated the excitement of a carnival, rather than the parody of pantomime.

The evening's strange combination of support acts should have suggested that changes were in store. American guitar group Foo Fighters preceded four male breakdancers, who took turns to spin on their heads to scratched snippets of James Brown songs.

When the Prodigy left the stage after a strikingly aggressive, 90-minute performance of former singles such as *Firestarter*, *Breathe* and *Poison*, as well as live favourites like *Mindfields* and *Serial Thrilla*, Howlett's band had demonstrated an enviable ability to reinvent itself. Oasis should take note.

LISA VERRICO

LONDON CONCERTS: A perfectionist in reflective mood at the keyboard; a disappointing violin concerto; and an all-star tribute

Snow business is slow business

Philharmonia
[illegible]
Festival Hall

IF IT'S Howard Blake, it must be Christmas. Why else would a great orchestra like the Philharmonia be turning its attention to music by the composer of *The Snowman*? Unfortunately for the orchestra, though, there was little festive cheer to be had in the rows of empty seats at the Festival Hall, and perhaps there was a lesson there: play better music and get a bigger audience. While the same band's supposedly difficult Ligeti series is packing the hall, this supposedly popular composer is emptying it.

Blake's Violin Concerto, first heard four years ago, could have been written at any time in the past 100 years, rooted as it is in bland convention. The opening, with its arching solo over a shimmering orchestra, sounds like poor-man's Sibelius, and it gives way to a seemingly interminable 25-minute movement in something like pastoral style. Things pick up slightly in the limpid Adagio and tamely dancing finale, both more concise. The Swedish violinist Katarina Andreasson played with conviction: apparently the work is big in Sweden, and, come to think of it, it belongs to a kind of Ikea school of composition.

At least there is a style here, something lacking in Jay Reise's *The Selfish Giant*, an inexplicable Philharmonia commission receiving its premiere. The American composer has subtitled his work, based on Wilde's fairy-tale, a "choreographic tone-poem", and it certainly could have done with some action. But what dance company would touch it? Though the half hour score is competently crafted for full orchestra and organ, it mostly meanders as directionless moderato, and the few energetic passages go nowhere fast. The orchestra looked understandably bored.

Thank heavens for Tchaikovsky, who came to the rescue with Act II of *The Nutcracker*. Even under the placid baton of Djong Victorin Yu the concert perked up, and it is not often one hears an orchestra of the Philharmonia's calibre in this music. The warm strings and lively wind and brass caught all the freshness of this enduring masterpiece.

JOHN ALLISON

As if heard in a dream

Mitsuko Uchida
Festival Hall

Mitsuko Uchida is a perfectionist. She plays fewer than 50 concerts a year, each minutely prepared. This programme, which grouped late works by Bach, Chopin and Schubert, was characteristically spare and proportioned. Her approach to each was utterly distinct; and each reading betrayed a deeply imagined gestation.

Yet the fact that she has concentrated her 25-year career on Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann has had its effect. And it was her performance of Schubert's last great sonata that will remain in the memory longest.

She is famous for her streamlined repertoire and, even this year, she was describing herself as a "closet Bach player". There was a tension in her reading of the Third English Suite which, while dynamic, also suggested an unseasoned performance.

She launched into the prelude with a tightly-sprung finger action that produced a rather loud, clangorous tone (though it must be said that the Festival Hall's Steinway, whose poor bass tuning was exposed in the first half of the concert, let her down). Yet there was a relentlessness about her hard finger action which stole some of the fantasy from the Allemande, the potential lightness from the Courante, and at times overwhelmed clear voicing. Her gentlest touch was reserved for the simply given Gavottes. Her Sarabande, however, was powerfully sculpted.

Questions of clear voicing also affected her Chopin. Headlong sequences were sometimes unbalanced by a heavy bass. A beguiling pianissimo transformed the two late Nocturnes into dream-like interludes. But this languid introspection worked less well in the Polonaise Fantasie. She pulled back into the cadence points, withdrawing into dim, slow regions of rubato, and exploding into others for all too brief flashes of fortissimo. She articulated an idiosyncratic vision of the work's architecture, but it lacked a sense of inevitability.

If the Chopin was laid uncomfortably bare in her hands, she played the Schubert with the unconscious assurance of one who had been dreaming it all her life. It began, like the best performances of late Schubert, as if it had never ceased. Voices were delicate and clear, producing radiant textures; the flow from introspective to declamatory was seamless.

Her own intense listening — to the strange modulations of the development, to the Beethovenian dissonances — drew a breath-held concentration from a packed house. In her hypnotic Andante Sostenuto, the wide-spaced accompanying figure sounded the subtlest of alarms, only to return utterly transformed in the major key, no longer an alarm but coaxing the melody onwards.

Her scherzo, with its almost neo-Classical twists of key, was wonderfully arched and the elliptical syncopations of the trio pungently lop-sided. She devoured the allegro — as her halting first theme gathered pace there was a sense of infectious tale-telling, rushing onward to the punchline. Exhaustion sapped force from the Presto: yet who would not be exhausted from living each note of this mammoth musical journey?

HELEN WALLACE

FRANK HERRMANN

Mitsuko Uchida: mixed success in a Festival Hall recital of late works by Bach, Chopin and Schubert

Celebration of a rabbi's rabbi

Hugo Gryn Memorial
Barbican

RESPECT and affection were the dominant qualities in a concert tribute to Rabbi Hugo Gryn, who died last year, and which inaugurated a memorial trust bearing his name for the promotion of religious and racial tolerance and the wider understanding of the Jewish faith. Gryn has been called "the rabbi's rabbi", who personified his favoured biblical quotation from the book of Micah: "Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God".

Something of his aspiration towards a freedom of the soul was captured in Robert Saxton's *Prayer before Sleep*, a short cantata commissioned in his memory by his son David, and premiered here by the soprano Teresa Cahill, with Raphael Walfisch (cello) and John York (piano). No other instruments are involved, nor would they have added to the lyrical melodic line of an English verse by the composer, a brief instrumental dance of rapture, and a Hebrew text from the Talmud.

A similar character of Hebrew chant infused the passionate *Nigun* by Ernest Bloch and Ravel's *Kaddisch* from his *Two Hebrew Songs*, both played with intense feeling by cello and piano. To lighten the mood, the actress Maureen Lipman spoke two monologues by Joyce Grenfell, and Lucie Skeaping, as singer and violinist, led two glops of Klezmer music to begin each half of the programme.

Nothing could have been more welcome, as an alternative to all this, than to hear Imogen Cooper at the piano bring her refinement of style and assured technique to four of Schubert's exquisite *Moments Musicaux* (D.780), two nature tone poems for piano by Janáček, *In the Mists* and *The Little Night Owl*, and a joyous polka by Smetana, *From a Student's Life*.

Memorial programmes are usually overloaded, and still to come was Mozart's superb G Minor String Quintet (K516), but by then it was past my bedtime and I knew it was in the safe hands of the three survivors of the famous Amadeus Quartet, with Louise Williams and Garfield Jackson as the viola players needed to complete the ensemble.

NOEL GOODWIN

A woman's place is wherever she wants

Sheila Rowbotham on the lives of two pioneer feminists

Getting into history is always chancy: those connected to well-known figures can be destined to a mention in parenthesis and appear merely as appendages. When the pacifist and eccentric socialist, Francis Sheehy Skeffington, was shot by the British Army during the Easter Rising of 1916, Hanna Sheehy Skeffington entered history books as his widow. Margaret Ward's biography reveals her to have been a remarkable woman in her own right who established a militant suffrage movement in Ireland, supported the organisation of women workers and went on to become a significant figure in Sinn Fein.

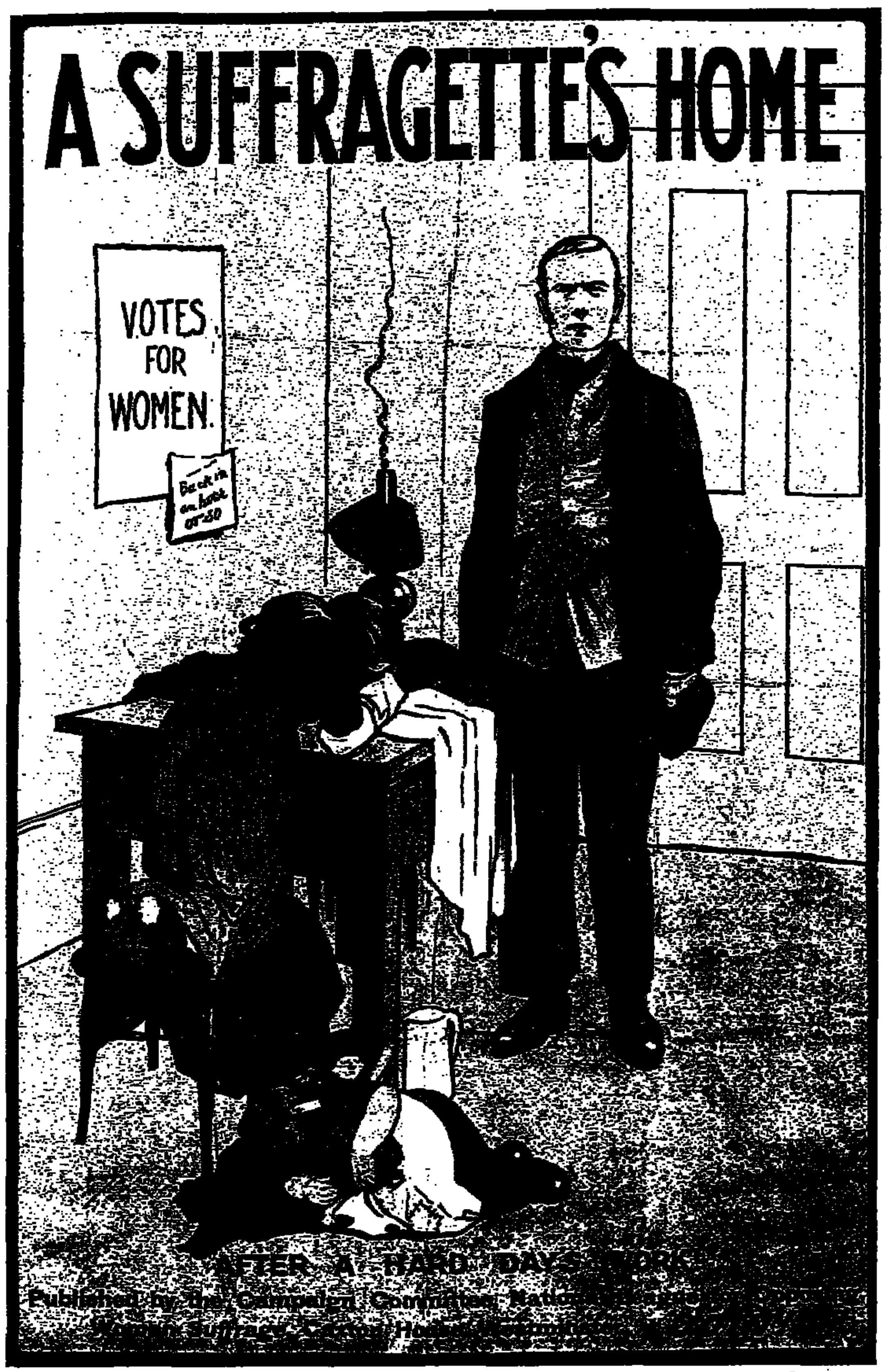
Harriot Stanton Blatch, the subject of Ellen Carol DuBois's biography, has been overshadowed by her famous mother, the American pioneer feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton. But Harriot Blatch herself played an important role in the feminist movement in the United States, campaigning for the federal amendment for women's suffrage, arguing for equal rights at work and a state payment for mothers to ensure their independence from men.

HANNA SHEEHY SKEFFINGTON
A Life
By Margaret Ward
Attic Press, £15.99
ISBN 1 85594 187 2

HARRIOT STANTON BLATCH AND THE WINNING OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE
By Ellen Carol DuBois
Yale, £25
ISBN 0 300 06562 0

Both were "advanced women" who rejected orthodox ideas of femininity. After marrying Harry Blatch, Harriot settled in England, startling Basingstoke in the early 1880s with her ideas on "the woman question" and her membership of the Fabian society. After her daughter Nora was born, Harry became the domestic nurturer. They returned to New York after the death of her youngest daughter, Helen, in 1896, living apart during the week so that Harriot could participate in politics. Raised the rebel, Harriot upset her fellow passengers on H. M. S. *Saxonia*, when she returned to Britain in 1918, by puffing away in the male preserve of the smoking room to avoid the wailing children on board.

Hanna's family were moderate nationalist middle class Catholics — immortalised by James Joyce as the Daniels family in *Stephen Hero*. But the Dublin home she set up with Frank Skeffington in 1903 was piled high with papers and books. "Like the lilies I dust not, neither do I darn," anounced Hanna. Among their friends were Maud Gonne, the poet George Russell, known as "AE", and Margaret Cousins, the feminist and mystic. The couple lived for ideas and causes. Frank's included socialism, pacifism and vegetarianism. He sported tweed knickerbockers, a "Votes for Women" badge and a long red beard. Joyce, who did not go for new men, called him "hairy Jaysus", while Frank and Hanna worried what would become of Joyce's Nora.


A SUFFRAGETTE'S HOME
VOTES FOR WOMEN
Back in an hour or so
AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORK
Published by the Campaign Committee, Nat
Women's Suffrage

Oh no, you don't: the campaign against votes for women was as vociferous as that in favour

Margaret Ward describes how Hanna and Frank were drawn into the turmoil of Irish radical politics; suffrage, Home Rule and socialism preoccupied them before the First World War. During the rebellion against British rule in 1916, Hanna took food to the rebels while Frank organised a citizens' militia to prevent looting. The British authorities tried to cover up the circumstances of his summary execution but an officer, Sir Francis Vane, believing the honour of the army was at stake, insisted on an inquiry. He lost his post, but became a lifelong friend to Hanna.

Throughout her life, Hanna faced the difficult task of balancing the claims of her feminism and her commitment to Irish independence. Margaret Ward gives a balanced account, sifting through stories and myths. In the American context the pull of loyalties was less extreme; however, Ellen DuBois describes how the First World War split all the feminist groups, making the slogan of "women first" no longer practicable.

Ellen DuBois is most confident on the debates within feminism and argues convincingly that Blatch's life shows that the polarisation between equal rights and reforms based on women's difference from men is a too-simple characterisation of feminism in the 1920s. I found the chapter on how the history of feminism has shifted over time especially suggestive — it looks as if a new book is tucked inside this one.

Margaret Ward gives a warmer account of her subject. There are endearing touches, such as Hanna, in a rare respite from struggle in 1925, sipping cocoa and arguing about Abbey Theatre plays with her son Owen at Dublin's Broadway Soda Fountain.

These two biographies not only tell of two women who played important roles in the history of feminism, they demonstrate how the focus on the individual can reveal connections between movements. Harriot Stanton Blatch linked British and American feminists, while Hanna Sheehy Skeffington maintained contacts between Ireland, Britain and the United States. "Networkers" are often served ill by posterity, slipping away from view when definitive divisions break coalitions apart. They were both rather too nuanced in their politics and too principled in their alignments to be celebrated. Blatch reverted to gradualist socialism after the First World War, not a popular cause in America, while Skeffington opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921 but broke with de Valera later, inclining towards the communists during the Spanish Civil War. Neither took easy choices or settled for comfortable courses — which makes them fascinating subjects for anyone interested in looking round corners that have often been missed in the history of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Power still the pivot

AS EUROPE stumbles towards union, we can reflect on the last time it was done. The names, of course, are different: Rome, not Brussels, the denarius, not the Euro, Octavian, not Helmut — but much is the same. Power remains pivotal, and power is the principal theme of both these novels: Allan Massie's *Antony* (Sceptre, £16.99; ISBN 0 340 55604 8) and Mario de Carvalho's *A God Strolling in the Cool of Evening* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.99; ISBN 0 297 81942 9).

The two complement each other, not least because the first is set in the murky dawn of the Roman Empire and the second in its long dusk. *Antony* concludes a quartet of Roman novels from a writer of indefatigable industry. Because Massie's output is prodigious, it is uneven. That is a flaw in *Antony*, but one for which there is recompense.

This is a retrospective account dicatated by a bibulous Antony to his secretary, Critias, who adds his own observations. But these become a disappointing device by which Massie sketches over matters well worthy of his sure touch. It is 44 BC, and Caesar is dead. A new triumvirate of Antony, Octavian — later and better known as Augustus — and Lepidus takes control. Antony goes east, and is ensnared by Cleopatra as Octavian wiles and smiles his way to autocracy in Rome. Dissipated, embittered and alone, Antony takes his own life after defeat at the battle of Actium in 31 BC. The Roman Republic is lost. Under Octavian, the Empire is born.

Massie masters the ebbs and flows — of Octavian's inexorable rise, of Antony's tragic fall. He alternates passages of maudlin introspection with others of compelling narrative: "The ground froze, the snow covered the mountains, the dead did not decay between the camps." He shows how fickle history is, how uncertain the reasons for actions are, how obscure. Despite the novel's unsatisfactory narrative balance, his Antony is utterly plausible, magnificent yet marred.

De Carvalho's protagonist and central character is a very different Roman, one Lucius Valerius, a magistrate in the (fictional) city of Tarcisis in Lusitania — modern Portugal. The sun is setting on the Roman Empire. It is a time when "oriental religions, given to zoolatry, proliferated, asking the gods of animals what the gods of men might not be able to grant". Outside the city, the barbarian Moors are threatening. Inside, the latest cult, Christianity, and the stirrings of the proletariat for power are causing dissention. It falls to Lucius to prevent the unravelling of the weave. But he falls in love with Iunia, the widowed leader of the Christians. That undermines his search for values in a disintegrating world.

All this allows de Carvalho to meditate on power and religion. He does it very well. Beautifully translated from the Portuguese by Gregory Rabassa, this novel succeeds in the two aims to which all historical novelists aspire: not only does it recreate a vanished world, but it increases our understanding of who we are. In European or Roman union, the questions remain similar, and the answers may prove the same.

ROSS LECKIE

And they can even talk

Howard Davies

THE LIBERTINE READER
Eroticism and Enlightenment in 18th-century France
Edited by Michel Feher
Zone Books, £24.95
ISBN 0 942299 41 8

I have always seen Laclos as one of a select group of great one-shot authors, up there with the likes of Gogol, Emily Brontë, Edmund Gosse and, one hopes, the chap who wrote the book about the Spice Girls. That is not too far from the truth. But here we find — new to me — an extraordinary essay, *On the Education of Women*, subtitled "Portrait of the Natural Woman," written in 1783, just a year after the publication of *Dangerous Liaisons*.

The scandalous success of *Dangerous Liaisons* was a mixed blessing to a left-leaning artillery captain in late-18th-century France. Laclos was later to play a walk-on part in the French Revolution and was keen to restore his reputation as *un homme serieux*. *On the Education of Women*, submitted to an essay competition, was his attempt to explain the essential moral of his novel to reassure the bourgeois society of La Rochelle, where he was then posted. He may also have wanted to give some comfort about his intended lifestyle to his new 20-year-old fiancée.

Sadly, the effort was destined to fail; the essay missed the prize, remained unpublished in his lifetime, and has been little read since. It is one of a number of fascinating curiosities brought to life in *The Libertine Reader*.

Supported by the French Ministry of Agriculture, this is publishing in the old Pléiade tradition. It is a modest sized paperback, yet with 1,322 wafer thin, dense pages. The editor, Michael Feher, crams in two full-length novels (*Dangerous Liaisons* and Diderot's *Indiscreet Jewels*) and seven other substantial but more obscure contributions from Diderot, Laclos, Crébillon *fils*, Dominique-Vivant Denon and the Marquis de Sade.

So value for money is not at issue, though one wonders how many non-French readers will be interested in some of the apocrypha presented here. But Feher and his co-conspirators are not mere anthologists. They are far more ambitious. In eight extended introductions they seek to present a *coherent analysis and defence of* libertinism.

Feher argues that we should look beneath de Sade's aggressive licentiousness, Diderot's salacious tales (the *Jewels*, whose indiscretions are revealed, are talking vaginas) and Laclos's conceit of deception. We should see them all as speculations "on the possibility of overcoming the inconstancy of natural appetites and the hypocrisy of social conventions, in order to experience a love that would be constant without being artificial."

How persuasive is this highly moral interpretation of the libertine agenda? For Diderot, the case is strong, and well supported here. Even the *Indiscreet Jewels* — oddly the only one of his novels published in his lifetime — is clearly a moral tale, and ends with a tribute to "the reassuring dream of a faithful woman".

The same is true of Abbé Prevost, represented by *The Soul of Modern Greek Woman*. Perhaps Laclos, too, in spite of the tragic denouement of *Dangerous Liaisons*, had a higher purpose in mind. Certainly his subsequent apologia suggests as much. But the Marquis de Sade, whose tale of incest, *Florville and Courval*, closes the *Reader*, may be a different matter.

Even the introduction by Marcel Henaff describes *Florville* as essentially a "search for an infinite combinatorial mechanism for the possibilities of perversion". (Something lost in the translation, here: perhaps "gang bang" might have come closer to the sense of the original French?) I doubt whether even de Sade himself would have wanted to join the club whose membership he is retrospectively awarded.

But the somewhat contrived attempt to create a school of *righteous* libertines, and to characterise French fops (*petits-maitres*) as 18th-century precursors of Relate counsellors, does not invalidate the essential purpose of *The Libertine Reader*. It illuminates a too-little-known corner of the French literature of the Enlightenment with a rich mixture of text and intelligent commentary. And all rendered just that little bit sweeter, for the English reader, by the enjoyment of a subsidy from the French taxpayer.

WARNER BROS

Dangerous liasions: Michelle Pfeiffer and John Malkovich in the scandalously successful 1988 film of Laclos's novel

War and pieces of history rewritten

Magnus Linklater

A LOOKING-GLASS TRAGEDY
By Christopher Booker
Duckworth, £25
ISBN 0 7156 2738 4

THE COST OF A REPUTATION
By Ian Mitchell
Topical Books, £15
ISBN 0 9531 581 0 1

This is the British Dreyfus affair, the darkest episode in this country's wartime record. It has stained the reputation of a Prime Minister, branded a peer of the realm as a war criminal, and resulted in the largest libel award ever made in a British court. The charges have become chillingly familiar ever since they were first raised by Count Nikolai Tolstoy in *The Victims of Yalta* almost 20 years ago: that at the end of the war, the British Army in Austria handed over some 67,000 anti-communist Cossacks and Yugoslavs to face almost certain death and imprisonment at the hands of their communist enemies.

Investigating the facts has become an obsession with those caught up in the affair. Christopher Booker has followed it ever since he first reviewed Tolstoy's book in 1978. Ian Mitchell is a newer recruit. Neither can be called wholly objective. Both throw new light on the affair.

Booker writes as a convert to the anti-Tolstoy faction. To begin with he shared the conviction that something approaching a major war crime had been committed. He accepted Tolstoy's subsequent evidence that the late Harold Macmillan and Brigadier Toby Low, now Lord Aldington, had conspired to act in breach of orders and official policy in order to ensure that Cossacks and Yugoslavs were handed back to the Russians, and then went on to cover up the truth of what had happened. Gradually, however, as documents accumulated, he became convinced that Tolstoy had gravely distorted the evidence. Now, finally, he has pulled the threads of that investigation together, and this is the result.

It is a massive and painstaking work. It acquits Macmillan, Aldington and the many British Army officers caught up in the repatriation of the major charges against them. He concludes that the conspiracy alleged by Tolstoy is without foundation, that the handover had been authorised at the highest military level, that thousands of Cossacks found not to be Soviet citizens had in fact been exempted, and that many of the subsequent atrocities and massacres had never taken place in the way that most writers on the period have assumed.

He bases his case on the discovery of new documents, particularly the extensive archive of Macmillan's opposite number, the United States political adviser in the area, Alexander Kirk. What they reveal is the broader picture of what was happening during this complex, fraught and confused period. Essentially, the claim is that, for the British Army, the repatriation was outweighed as a priority by the threat from Marshal Tito to annex large parts of southern Austria and Northern Italy.

It was in this atmosphere of imminent conflict that orders were given for all Russian and Yugoslav prisoners of war to be handed back. While Tolstoy argued that Macmillan, as the Minister responsible, and Aldington as the officer directly in charge, bent every rule and order to please their Russian allies by ensuring that there was no screening out of White Russians, emigrés, and others who should never have been repatriated, Booker says that these two were only bit players. He states that in the aftermath of Yalta, the screening out of possibly innocent prisoners was never as clear-cut a condition as Tolstoy claims. Not that orders remained unquestioned — indeed, the agonised exchange of messages is manifest evidence of doubts in the minds of those charged with carrying them out.

Booker is at his most convincing in exculpating Macmillan, whose specific use of the phrase "Cossacks and White Russians" in his diaries led Tolstoy to assume that he was aware that innocent men were being sent to their death. He demonstrates that Macmillan played no interventionist role during the crucial Klagenfurt conference when the decision to repatriate was endorsed. As for Aldington, the suggestion that he deliberately disobeyed orders to ensure that prisoners were sent back is constantly undermined by the stream of telegrams and instructions that demonstrate otherwise. Tolstoy's evidence is exposed as partial and occasionaly distorted.

None of this should be taken as suggesting that terrible things did not happen. In particular the fate of the Yugoslavs still makes searing evidence, as we hear of British soldiers having to club, threaten, and sometimes shoot desperate men in order to force them onto trains which would take them back to face almost certain death. Booker may have demonstrated that some massacres did not take place quite as Tolstoy described them, but this does not mean that killings, torture and imprisonment did not happen once the prisoners crossed the borders. This remains a dreadful event which still haunts the memory of those who took part.

Ian Mitchell's account needs to be read alongside the Booker work. Privately printed, in the shadow of one of the most all-encompassing injunctions ever handed down by a British judge, he claims that Aldington was helped by a network of friends in high places who quietly removed key documents from the records. He suggests that the whole thrust of Aldington's evidence is open to question.

The problem with both these books is that they come from convinced protagonists in the affair. Booker's manuscript was read and approved by Aldington. Mitchell accepts the broad thrust of Tolstoy's conclusions. Despite the thousands of words, the mass of evidence, the years of research, the definitive work on this seminal episode in our history has yet to be written.

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Forgeries or not? Never a black and white case

Roy Foster rifles through the contentious jottings of a dashing hero of Irish nationalism

THE AMAZON JOURNAL
OF ROGER CASEMENT
Edited by Angus Mitchell
Anaconda Editions, £17.98
ISBN 1 901 990 00 1

ROGER CASEMENT'S
DIARIES
1910: The Black
and the White
Edited by Roger Sawyer
Pimlico, £10
ISBN 0 7126 7375 X

During the crisis of radical Irish nationalism just before the First World War, Sir Roger Casement was one of the most glamorous recruits to the cause. A tall, dramatically handsome Ulsterman with an upper-class background, he had had a distinguished career in the British consular service: his knighthood in 1911 was bestowed for his exposure of the horrors inflicted on natives of the Congo and the Amazon basins by the rubber industry. He resigned from the service in 1913 and became more and more involved with the "advanced" wing of the Irish Volunteering movement; with the outbreak of war he set off to raise "Irish Brigades" among prisoners of war in Germany, tried to organise German military help for a rebellion in Ireland, returned on a U-boat in 1916, was captured, and executed for treason.

Nonetheless, his reputation has been handled gingerly even in independent Ireland, because of the dirty tricks used to impugn his "moral character" by the British establishment in order to head off a campaign in his favour mounted by influential friends after his sentence. This was done by circulating extracts from several alleged journals and cash-ledgers, loosely called the "black diaries", detailing homosexual encounters, usually with native boys in the areas where he campaigned for human rights.

No one could condone the use to which these documents were put by Casement's enemies: but were they even genuine? While many Irish nationalists claimed these were forgeries, Casement's biographers — faced with the documents' detail, length and apparently genuine handwriting — have usually accepted that they are not.

These two books represent yet another stage in the argument. Sawyer and Mitchell started out together, some years ago, to produce a full edition of the writings covering Casement's 1910 journey up the Amazon, into a world of genocide, torture, slavery and sadism inflicted by local representatives of the British-registered Peruvian Amazon Company. Echoes of Conrad are inescapable: the novelist and the humanitarian knew each other, and Casement admired *Heart of Darkness*.

The editorial point of the exercise raises yet again the forgery issue: for the 1910 Putamayo venture was recorded in two parallel diaries. One was the voluminous, discursive, so-called "white" diary now in the National Library of Ireland, with a typescript version prepared to bolster Casement's case against the horrors he had witnessed; the other is the 1910 volume of the "black" diary which gives a parallel version of events, often in a kind of shorthand, and includes numerous sexual transactions and obsessive genital observations about local boys and men. Both Sawyer and Mitchell started out by believing it was genuine, and that the "white" diary was a cleaned-up and much lengthier version of the "black" original. Sawyer still believes so; Mitchell decided that the "black" journal was indeed a forgery because of internal inconsistencies. The editors went their separate ways, and these separate books are the result.

Sawyer's book is to be welcomed for, at least, printing a more accurate transcription of the "black diary" than the version put out by the ever-enterprising Olympia Press in 1959. Mitchell's edition of the Putamayo journal is much fuller, and impressively annotated; it is a vital document for anyone interested in the exploitation of South America during the heyday of untrammelled — and unaccountable — capitalism, when the new motor industry turned rubber into "black gold".

MARY EVANS

Captured and tried for treason in 1916: Roger Casement in court

Mitchell's evidence for the fraudulence of the parallel "black diary" is sometimes arresting, but not always as convincing to the reader as to himself. Much is made of a remark of Casement's own about his "celibacy", but in context it seems clearly to mean "childlessness". There is an apparent discrepancy where the "black" diary states that Casement stayed at an Iquitos hotel, instead of (as we know from his letters) at a private house: but it could as easily mean that he rejected the hotel room which he calls "dreadful".

Inconsistencies of names, dates and spellings do occur, but could be explained by the different circumstances of compiling the two documents; so could the fact that Casement's frequently-documented eye-strain affects the writing in the lengthy "white" journal, but not the jotted-down "black" diary. Elsewhere, indeed, Mitchell instances "variations" in the writing as a sign of the forger's hand: they could also be evidence of Casement's failing sight.

Above all, to believe that the "black" diary is a forgery made using the material in the "white" diary requires belief that the forger went to the trouble of composing a number of different volumes, plus a cash ledger, in enormous detail, from the moment Casement embarked on nationalist activities in 1914. It also involves ignoring handwriting analysis which has declared that the two documents were written by the same person. Nor are we any nearer pinning the forger's identity, though the name of the Head of Special Branch, Sir Basil Thomson, recurs. He gave numerous conflicting accounts of how the diaries were found (and was himself, eventually, sexually disgraced being found committing "gross indecency" in a London park with a prostitute wonderfully named Thelma de Lava).

These books do not resolve the vexed question of the "black" diaries' provenance, and it seems that belief in their authenticity or unauthenticity will continue to be swayed by political predilection: some of the Casement commentary in recent years has continued to be bedevilled by the implication that homosexuality is *ipso facto* connected with hypocrisy and perversion. On the other hand, at a time when Oscar Wilde is being claimed by some imaginative spirits as a gay Irish nationalist hero, it seems rather a pity to take away Casement's counter-cultural credentials. One recent biographer has even cheerfully asserted that here was a man "at ease with his anus".

More profoundly, these books — and particularly Mitchell's — provide the valuable service of documenting Casement's pilgrimage into sacrificial nationalism as part of an anti-imperial crusade. In a fascinating entry for October 24, 1910, he confides that he would like to arm and train the Indians for insurrection against their torturers. At the same time, he still believed that if the territory were British for a year, he could "scour it clean" with a hundred men. By the end of his investigations, while he still had faith in people like Sir Edward Grey, he was setting towards his own Conradian journey which would eventually take him through wartime Germany to his lonely landing on a Kerry beach. Despite their opposing beliefs both these editions shed further light on his individuality and his heroic humanitarianism: it is hard not to believe that there is more to come.

Filing past the front line

The sword and the pen clash regularly. Soldiers and journalists are usually, although ot invariably, different kinds of eople with conflicting interests. The soldier's instinct is to censor nd be safe; the journalist's to publish and be damned. The relationship between them is well-patrolled territory.

Philip Knightley's *The First Casualty* was the tale told, in a onsistently adversarial fashion, rom the scribblers' point of view. Hudson and Stanier's *War and the Media* is a counter-bombardment rom the soldier's side of the lines. The dust cover features a romantic mage of the matchless Kate Adie in Saudi Arabia. But the rest does not ive up to this early promise.

Miles Hudson and John Stanier hronicle the skirmishes between he media and the military from the Crimea to the present day. They have wide experience of politics and oldiering, but all from a while ago, and some of the lessons drawn may be beyond their pensionable life.

The witnesses are mainly establishment figures — politicians like Douglas Hurd and journalists like ohn Simpson. (I once shared a public platform with John Simpson on which he described himself as an "establishment creep"; he was exaggerating, I hope).

Martin Bell

WAR AND THE MEDIA
By Miles Hudson
and John Stanier
Sutton Publishing, £19.99
ISBN 0 7509 1220 0

The authors seem to yearn for a world from which the media are excluded and in which national eaders chart their course on the basis of advice from the grave and stately cables of their ambassadors.

Dream on, gentlemen. The world has changed and may even be a better place because of it. Besides, politicians have only themselves to blame if television and public opinion fill a policy vacuum left by heir indirection.

The military have adjusted better to the new realities. In today's operations, a successful commander need neither shun the journalists nor court them; but he has to be aware of the perils and opportunities their presence brings. He is not obliged to be a media star. Some are, some aren't. General Rupert Smith, who commanded in both the Gulf and Bosnia, gave only one television interview in all that time; but he had articulate deputies and spokesmen — Patrick Cordingley and Arthur Denaro in the Gulf, Gary Coward in Bosnia — who enjoyed his confidence as well as ours and did the talking for him. So he could use the new technology to speak to his most important constituency, the families of the soldiers serving under him.

It is much against the grain of this book, but the media can actually serve the cause of peace. War crimes are now arguably harder to commit and conceal. And television has made possible a surrogate form of warfare: adversaries bombard each other with soundbites and threats before returning to the negotiating table without spilling a drop of blood. This happens biennially between Iraq and the United States.

I hope that the authors, one of whom is a retired Field Marshal, will permit a personal quibble from a humble former corporal. The charge that in Bosnia I openly supported the Muslims would come as a surprise to the Bosnian Government, which regularly accused me of favouring the Serbs.

Desire down the ages: Lorene Resnick's work is inspired by the drapery of Hellenistic sculpture

Jeanette Winterson wonders what makes sex safe

Out from under the counter

What is the difference between erotic art and pornography? Intention? Subject matter? Skill? Does it depend entirely on the viewer or the viewed — the object in its own right, as important as who is doing the looking? Why are erections x-rated and breasts a page in a family newspaper?

The breasts in *Ars Erotica* come in round numbers but the erections stand by themselves. This is not a book for the easily embarrassed and its coffee table format makes it difficult to hide. Removing the cover will not aid the modest — *Erotica* is written in large letters on the spine. I took it on the train and nobody sat next to me.

That was a pity because debate is what this book is all about. It is important to wonder why the Classical nudity of the Old Masters has become disinfected of any erotic charge while a Mapplethorpe exhibition brews a row. Men, women and children are encouraged to gaze on the likes of Tintoretto's *Susannah Bathing* or Rubens's *Diana and her Nymphs*. Yet in the first painting an old bald voyeur is spying on a woman taking a bath and in the second, a bunch of naked beauties (doing what?) are being jumped on by a gang of hairy fauns. Maybe leching and gang-rape do not matter if they are 400 years old, painted in oils and in a museum.

We could conclude that either people don't really look at pictures once those pictures are canonised, or that we go on looking because the subject matter ceases to be of primary importance. We look past it into the abstract relationships of line and colour and form.

I think both positions obtain, although the missionary position of lying beneath a great painting with eyes shut is commoner. Edward Lucie-Smith is right to tease us over this, to make us look again at the familiar if only so that we do not censor what is new.

ARS EROTICA
An Arousing History of
Erotic Art
Edited by Edward
Lucie-Smith
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25
ISBN 0 297 82298 5

The book has 12 chapters and it ripples with illustrations. "Sex in the Head" examines society's changing attitudes to the erotic and sets up a powerful argument against ideas of fixity. It is true that human beings always have been fascinated by sex but not true that the same fetishes/ taboos/ desires hold good from generation to generation. There are plenty of clips from the East here, an erotic imagination which seems very strange in the context of our own tradition.

"Naked as Adam" and "Naked as Eve" set the contemporary against the Classical, while "Boys will be Boys" is devoted to the homosexual male. The homosexual male does seem to swell over the pages of this book and sometimes to distract the author from his wider concerns. Never mind. An abundance of male genitals only makes the book more fun and the element of play is part of its charm. *Ars Erotica* calls itself a history but it is more a subjective personal collection of images and ideas. That is what makes it stimulating. And of course the pictures.

I would have preferred less emphasis on the 20th century and more information about the straightforward pornography — the crude and the rude — used as a means to unsettle the reader's gaze here. Edward Lucie-Smith does not try for a clear distinction between art and porn, though he does insist that outside of our own modern-day society it was possible for an image to be erotically charged *and* still carry other meanings without the erotic content swamping everything. He is quite right. With us it is the tiresome business of no sex or all sex. We do not cope well with more complex patterns. One reason why lesbian and gay image-making is so threatening is this complexity of meaning inseparable from its clear erotic content.

"Women in Love" is a disappointing chapter because Lucie-Smith uses only two images by women. No de Lempicka, no Gluck, no Laurencin, although these women get a line in the text. In a book of over 200 illustrations where less than half a dozen are by women, these absences, and those of O'Keefe, Cindy Sherman, even Vigée Le Brun and her half-clads seem a waste. Certainly there are far fewer women artists and very few erotic pictures by women until the 20th century. All the more reason then, especially with this book's contemporary bias, to include their work.

That said, Lucie-Smith has wisely refused any prohibition against explicit images of the female body. He does not approve of censorship. He believes that censorship always stuns creativity and denies the reality of human desire. I agree, providing no double standard operates and providing we accept that the art/porn debate can never be resolved.

An uncompanionable relationship

Daniel Johnson

THE YALE
COMPANION TO
JEWISH WRITING
AND THOUGHT IN
GERMAN
CULTURE,
1096-1996
Edited by Sander L.
Gilman and Jack Zipes
Yale, £35
ISBN 0 300 06824 7

Was there a German-Jewish symbiosis? If so, did it survive the Holocaust? Or was the rhetoric of mutual respect and tolerance which Jews so often lauded in pre-Nazi Germany in reality always a snare, the ubiquity of German anti-Semitism obvious to all but the self-deluding and detested Jewish minority, the whole relationship a macabre one-sided love affair in which the German beloved rejected, humiliated and finally murdered the Jewish lover? Though the vehemence with which these questions are answered has grown in the years since 1945, they remain open. Most Germans would answer yes, yes and no; most Jews no, no and yes. The importunity of the former and the bitterness of the latter are both understandable — but history is an implacable judge. So who is right?

After digesting the 864 pages of this impressive Yale *Companion*, with scores of essays by dozens of scholars on every aspect of the subject, I confess that I am no closer to a definitive view. But nobody could read it without a powerful sense of the loss which mankind, and not merely Germany, sustained at Auschwitz. For what perished there were not just countless Jewish individuals, families, communities: it was also the grave of a specific German-Jewish intellectual tradition. That tradition dates from the Enlightenment and the Jewish Emancipation which followed it. Liberal-minded, though often socialist or conservative in politics; freethinking, though often mystical in religion; progressive, though often romantic in culture. We see it at its best in the urbane yet idealistic Jewish salons of Berlin which Mme de Staël so admired; in the acerbic love-hate satires on Germany and Austria of Heinrich Heine and Karl Kraus; in the spiritual intensity of Martin Buber's journal, *Der Jude*, and Franz Rosenzweig's Free Jewish School at Frankfurt; in the poetic visionaries and victims Else Lasker-Schüler and Gertrud Kolmar.

All this, and much more, is richly documented in the *Companion*. No consistent editorial view is imposed, and eccentricities — quite rightly — abound. Thus one contributor defends the grim Stalinism of the novelist Anna Seghers. Another takes the part of Hans-Joachim Schoeps, the Prussian-Jewish nationalist whose band of "shock troops" had almost everything in common with the Nazis except anti-Semitism. The whole phenomenon of what Theodor Lessing called "Jewish self-hatred" is somewhat underplayed. The essay on the radical polemicist Ludwig Börne, for instance, does scant justice to the ferocity of his critique of Judaism, which, via Bruno Bauer, Karl Marx and Eugen Dühring, was eventually also taken up by "left-wing" Nazis such as Joseph Goebbels. (The bibliography for this piece does not cite a seminal paper by Orlando Figes.) The novelist Jakob Wassermann is likewise exonerated of Jewish self-hatred: yet the weaknesses of his major works, once compared with Thomas Mann's but now little read, stem from this insecure sense of his own identity.

Nor am I entirely convinced by the case that is implicitly made here for the continuity of Jewish culture in postwar Germany. As much space is devoted to the last half-century as to the entire 19th century. Can it be right to make the coda as long as the exposition?

But these are minor cavils. The virtues of the Gilman and Zipes volume are manifest and manifold, lifting it well above the common ruck of scholarly "companions" with which academic presses are now flooding the market. A good example of the latter is *A Companion to German Literature* by Eda Sagarra and Peter Skrine (Blackwell, £60). Nearly twice as expensive and less than half as long as the Yale *Companion*, the Sagarra and Skrine volume plods along well-worn paths, padded out with a humdrum biographical index of authors which takes up a third of the book. Of little interest to specialists, this Blackwell companion does not even serve undergraduates well: it is not a book to dip into. The Yale *Companion* is genuinely companionable: eclectic, erudite, sometimes rebarbative but more often fun. Not unlike so many of the marvellous lives it commemorates.

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BRITAIN

A TOWER in Caernarvon overlooking the Menai Straits and a Northumberland home thatched in heather are among historic properties available for Christmas week from the Landmark Trust, from £610 and sleeping four. Details: 01628 825925.

■ BAILIFFSCOURT, a hotel on the East Sussex coast which resembles a medieval monastery but was built early this century, is offering a Christmas house-party atmosphere from £499 for a three-night stay. Details: 01903 723511.

■ SCOTTISH wildlife, the animal and bird variety, will be on view during a week's tour with Naturetrek, starting from Aviemore or Inverness on December 20. Stay in the Spey Valley and Caithness before spending Christmas in Orkney. The tour costs £695 with hotel accommodation and meals. Details: 01962 733051.

■ CHRISTMAS in Edinburgh may prove more civilised than Hogmanay and is on offer from Goldenrail for £275 including two nights' half-board at a four-star hotel with meals and entertainment. Details: 0161-238 5206.

■ *DEVON for Christmas is* on offer from Superbreak, with a four-night package from December 23 at the *Durrant House Hotel* overlooking the River Torridge at Bideford costing £330. The offer includes full board and entertainment. Details: 0161-238 5257.

■ WELCOME in the new year with the Animals, or at least suriviving members of the band, who will be playing at Le Meridien Piccadilly's gala dinner dance in London *on* December 31. Seven courses, the party and a night in the hotel will cost £225. Details: 0171-734 8000.

EUROPE

CHRISTMAS on the slopes is still possible with Ski Esprit — with special deals for children. A week from December 21 in a chalet, with meals provided, in a choice of French Alpine resorts will cost adults £440 including flights, with one child under 18 going free and other children paying half-price. Details: 01252 616789.

■ A *FESTIVE* week's *skiing* in Italy for £149, based on four sharing self-catering accommodation, is possible on a *Thomson Ski holiday* available from Lunn Poly. Fly from Gatwick on December 21 and stay at Cervinia. Details from *Lunn Poly Holiday Shops.*

■ THE COTE D'AZUR is seldom associated with holiday bargains but Eurovillages is offering a week from December 20 at a holiday village at Cap Esterel from £315 for five, including ferry crossings for car and passengers and studio accommodation. Details: 01606 734400.

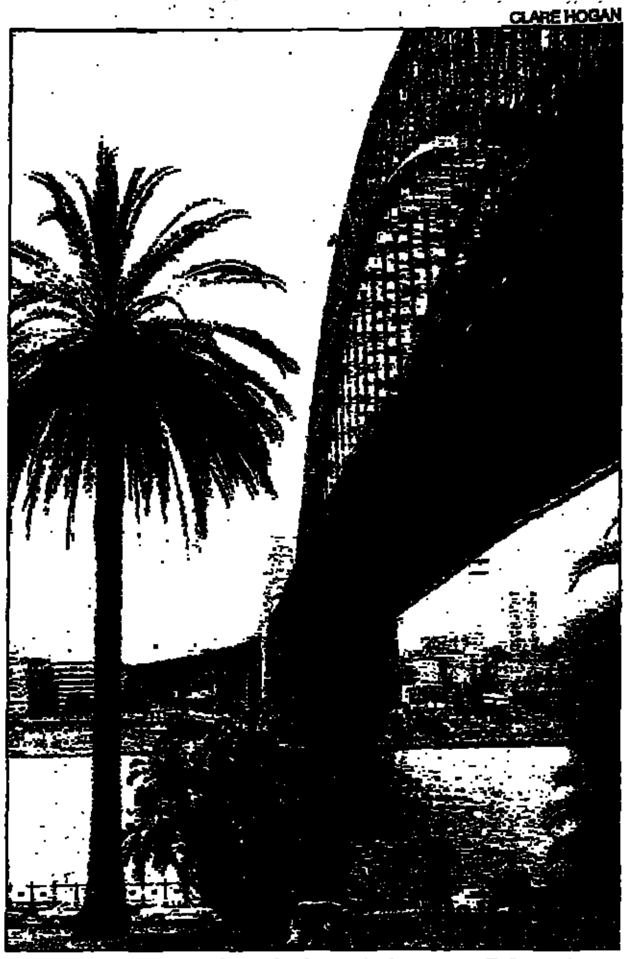
■ BAZAARS and the Blue Mosque will provide a different festive holiday in Istanbul with Accommodation Overseas. Fly from Heathrow between December 22 and 24 for three nights B&B at the Hotel Hippodrome for £339. Details: 0181-977 2984.

■ A GOLFER's dream Christmas is available at Portmarnock Hotel and Golf Links near Dublin. The 25th starts with a greeting from Santa Claus, *followed* by 18 holes and Christmas dinner, and forms part of a three-day break with all meals and *activities for £230. Travel* extra. Details: 00 3531 846 0611.

■ SORRENTO for Christmas *is on offer from the Amalfi* Coast resort's Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria — with an extra night free. Between December 19 and 28, six nights will cost £360, and from December 24 to 27, three nights will cost £240. Most meals included. Details: 0800 969 765 1677 5358.

■ THOSE who need pampering after the festivities are over can join a luxury ski week in Zermatt with the Ski Club of Great Britain from January 3. The holiday includes half-board at the four-star Hotel Sonne with full use of its spa and guided skiing for £750. Details: 0181-410 2000.

CLARE HOGAN



Harbouring thoughts of a hot Christmas? Visit Sydney

LONG-HAUL

ENJOY a *"barbie"* in Sydney on Christmas Day and new year on the Great Barrier Reef on a 17-day trip with Solo's Holidays. The tour begins with a flight from Gatwick to Sydney on December 23 and continues at a resort in Cairns. At £1,995 a person, it is not cheap but does include B&B, festive meals and sightseeing. Details: 0181-951 2800.

■ TORONTO for £225 return could make a Canadian Christmas a bargain deal this year. Travelpack is offering the low fares for flights from Gatwick on December 17 and 24, returning on January 5 and 6. Details: 0990 747100.

■ BELLY DANCERS and bazaars will abound during a Moroccan Christmas available from Co-op Travelcare. The week's Panorama self-catering holiday, starting with a flight from Gatwick on *December 19, costs £377. Details*: 0541 500388.

■ MICKEY MOUSE, the Kennedy Space Centre and white sand beaches will all be available over the holiday season with a Unijet fly-drive holiday, starting with a flight from Manchester to Orlando on Christmas Eve. The 15-day trip costs £399 a person; vehicle insurance extra. Details: 0990 336336.

■ STAY in one place in Florida, and a fortnight's accommodation with Style Holidays will cost £429 a person with children half-price and car hire included. Flights available from Gatwick and Manchester on December 18. Details: 0181-568 1999.

■ TAKE OFF on Christmas Day and you can get a return flight to San Francisco or Los Angeles *from Heathrow* for £243 plus tax if you are a student or under 26. The offer from Campus Travel is available for *flights up to March 31* and the ticket is valid for a month. Details: 0171-730 2101.

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Fresh guidance on youth custody provisions

Regina v A. M. and related appeals

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Douglas Brown and Mr Justice Kay

[Judgment December 5]

Guidance given in 1986 on the inter-relation between youth custody provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 1982 and section 53(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 as they then stood would be revised in the light of the changed sentencing regime which currently prevailed.

In particular, in balancing the desirability of keeping young offenders out of long terms of custody against the necessity of imposing substantial sentences for serious offences to reflect the appropriate punishment and deterrence, a sentencer should think long and hard before ordering detention in excess of the 24-month maximum provided by the 1982 Act.

Where, however, the sentencer was satisfied that a longer, although not substantially longer sentence was required, he should impose whatever period he considered appropriate under the 1933 Act.

Section 1B of the 1982 Act, as it currently stood, incorporated amendments made by section 123 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, section 63 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and section 17 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

Section 53(2) and (3) of the 1933 Act, as it currently stood, incorporated amendments made by section 2 of the Criminal Justice Act 1961, section 126 of the 1988 Act, section 64 of the 1991 Act, section 67 of the Criminal Justice Act 1993, section 16 of the 1994 Act and section 44 of the Crime (Sentences) Act 1997.

The Court of Appeal so held when determining appeals against sentence by A. M., R. K., C. L., B. M., D. M., G. H., D. H. and L. W., all aged from 14 to 17.

Mrs Edna Leonard, Mr Mark Savill, Miss Jennet Treharne, Mr David Cadin, Mr Stephen Clayton, Miss Joanne Kidd, Mr Paul Spencer and Mr Peter Murphy, all assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, respectively, for the offenders; Mr David Perry for the Crown.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, giving the judgment of the court, set out section 1B of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 which provided for a maximum term of detention of 24 months which might be imposed on offenders aged 15, 16 and 17 in a young offender institution, and section 53(2) and (3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, whereby an offender aged between 10 and 17 who had been convicted on indictment of certain specified offences might be detained for a maximum term which did not exceed that for which an adult might be imprisoned.

He said that the effect of the numerous amendments of each section enacted over the years in relation to offenders aged 14, 15, 16 or 17 on date of conviction, had been to assimilate in several important respects custodial sentences imposed under the two sections.

In particular, both were subject to the important restrictions and provisions set out in sections 1 and 2 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and both were subject to the same provisions governing release and credit for time spent in pre-sentence custody.

However there remained important differences between the two sections:

1 Detention under section 1B could be imposed on offenders aged 15, 16 or 17 but not on those aged 14, for any imprisonable offence; whereas detention under section 53(2) and (3) was available for those aged 14 to 17, and younger, but only on conviction of specified offences.

2 Detention under section 1B was subject to a 24-month maximum and a two-month minimum whereas that under section 53(2) and (3) was subject to no maximum or minimum.

3 Detention under section 1B would be served in a young offender institution; under section 53(2) and (3) the offender would be detained in such place and subject to such conditions as the Home Secretary might direct or arrange.

4 Detention under section 1B might be ordered by the crown court where an offender of 15, 16 or 17 had been convicted by magistrates for an offence punishable on indictment for a term exceeding six months and the magistrates had committed him for sentence under section 37 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980; whereas detention under section 53(2) and (3) might only be ordered where the offender had been convicted in the crown court on indictment. It was therefore important that magistrates should commit to the crown court and not themselves try offences which might merit an order under section 53(2) and (3).

In *R v Fairhurst* ([1986] 1 WLR 1374), a notable guideline decision, the Court of Appeal had considered the inter-relation between the youth custody provisions in the 1982 Act, then providing a maximum sentence of 12 months, and section 53(2) of the 1933 Act as it then stood.

Its guidance had been adapted since to changing conditions: see *R v Wainfur* ([1997] 1 Cr App R (S) 43). The court now reconsidered the guidance in the light of the changed sentencing regime which currently prevailed.

The court unreservedly endorsed the statement in *Fairhurst* (at pp1376 to 1377) that a balance was to be struck between the objectives of keeping young offenders out of long terms of custody on the one hand and, on the other, the need to impose sufficiently substantial sentences on those who committed serious crimes to provide both appropriate punishment and deterrence and to protect the public.

The 24-month maximum was intended to ensure that lengthy periods of detention were not imposed where it could be avoided; any sentencer had to think long and hard before passing a sentence which exceeded that limit.

But the co-existence of the powers contained in section 53(2) and (3) recognised the unwelcome but undoubted fact that some crimes committed by offenders of the age group merited sentences of detention in excess of 24 months.

The court reviewed the propositions laid down in *Fairhurst* (at p1377) and agreed with those there set out as propositions (1) and (2).

By proposition (3) the court in *Fairhurst* had stated that where the offence plainly called for a greater sentence than the 12-month limit, then the maximum under the 1982 Act, and was sufficiently serious to call for a sentence of two years or more had the offender been 17 or over, then it would be proper to sentence to a similar term under the 1933 Act.

It further stated that if the offence would merit a sentence of less than two years but more than 12 months for an offender of 17 or over then the sentence should normally be one of youth custody and not detention under section 53(2); and that it could not be said that the difference between a sentence of, say, 21 months and one of 12 months youth custody was so great that the 12-month term could be regarded as inappropriate.

In the court's judgment, that rule should no longer be followed. Its effect had been to create a sentencing no-man's land in the case of offenders for whom youth custody was available, between the maximum, then 12 months, and a term of 24 months under section 53(2).

The raising of the maximum term to 24 months had led to the adoption of a similar rule: see *Wainfur*.

The existence of a no-man's land necessarily meant that a sentencing court was deterred from passing a sentence within that area even when such a sentence was what it concluded was the right sentence.

The court should not exceed the 24-month limit without much careful thought; but if it concluded that a longer, even if not much longer, sentence was called for, then it should impose whatever it considered the appropriate period of detention under section 53(2) and (3).

If on a plea of guilty to an offence falling within section 53(2) and (3) the court imposed a sentence of 24 months detention in a young offender institution it was not to be inferred that the court had failed to give credit for a guilty plea: but for the plea, the sentence might properly have been longer.

It was desirable that when sentencers imposed such a sentence in those circumstances, that was expressly stated.

The court agreed with propositions (4) and (5) set out in *Fairhurst* (at p1378).

In that case the court had also referred to the problem arising where two offences had been committed by a 15 or 16-year old, one of which carried a maximum sentence of 14 years and the other carried a lower maximum.

The court had there considered that it was not proper to pass a sentence under section 53(2) in respect of the first offence, which would not otherwise merit it, in order to compensate for the grossly inadequate 12-month youth custody maximum then available for the other offence; but that where it could truly be said that the offender's conduct giving rise to the second offence was part and parcel of the events giving rise to the first, such a sentence might properly be passed.

His Lordship said that that problem had now been mitigated by sections 1 and 2 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 which entitled the court to take account of the seriousness not only of the offence in question but also of the combination of that offence and of one or more offences associated with it, as defined by section 31(2) of the 1991 Act.

The court could now when considering the seriousness of an offence falling within section 53(2) and (3) take account of an associated offence even if it were not part and parcel of the main offence and did not fall within section 53(2) and (3).

Having referred to the problem, stated in *Fairhurst* (at p1378), in respect of passing consecutive or concurrent sentences under the two sections, his Lordship said that there was now no difference between the sections in relation to release and to pre-sentence time spent in custody.

That meant that if one or more offences fell within and merited detention under section 53(2) and (3) and other offences did not fall within that section but did merit an order for detention in a young offender institution, the sentencing court might properly and without causing administrative difficulty sentence the offender to a term in a young offender institution consecutively to a term ordered under section 53(2) and (3), unless that order was of indefinite duration.

Consecutive sentences should not however be imposed in that way on offenders aged 15: such offenders might be detained in secure accommodation and difficulties could result if a consecutive sentence in a young offender institution were passed.

It was generally undesirable to impose terms concurrently under both sections. Where some of the offences fell within section 53(2) and (3) and others were associated but did not fall within that section it would usually be preferable to impose a term under section 53(2) and (3) which took account of those other associated offences.

In such a case the practice recommended in *Fairhurst* of imposing no separate penalty for the lesser offence should be adopted. If the court were minded to impose concurrent terms under the two sections it should before doing so make sure that no administrative difficulty would result, particularly in the case of a 15-year-old.

The court reminded sentencers of the need to make it clear whether a sentence being imposed was one of detention in a young offender institution or one under section 53(2) and (3): if more than two years in a young offender institution was imposed the excess was remitted.

Magistrates were also reminded of the need to commit for trial on indictment any case which might merit detention under section 53(2) and (3).

The court then reviewed and determined the appeals in the individual cases.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Headquarters.

Denial of natural justice over bridleway change

Regina v Secretary of State for the Environment, Ex parte Slot

Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Swinton Thomas and Sir Brian Neill

[Judgment November 27]

A property owner who had applied for the diversion of a bridleway on her land was denied natural justice when a planning inspector and the local authority refused to let her make independent representations when the diversion was challenged by an objector, and refused to give her a copy of the objector's letter.

On the facts, the property owner was a person by whom a representation or objection had been made, and as such was entitled to an opportunity of being heard by the inspector.

The Court of Appeal so held allowing an appeal by Mrs Anne Slot against the dismissal by Mr Justice Hidden on July 16, 1996 of her application for an order of certiorari to quash a planning inspector's decision dated August 9, 1995 not to confirm a bridleway diversion under section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.

Schedule 6 of the 1980 Act provides that in the making of a bridleway diversion order: "(2) If any representation or objection duly made is not withdrawn the secretary of state shall, before confirming or making the order, as the case may be, if the objection is made by a local authority cause a local inquiry to be held and in any other case either ... (a) cause a local inquiry to be held, or (b) afford to any person by whom any representation or objection has been duly made and not withdrawn an opportunity of being heard by a person appointed by him for the purpose."

Mr Meyric Lewis for Mrs Slot; Mr Timothy Corner for the secretary of state.

LORD JUSTICE SWINTON THOMAS said Mrs Slot owned Rydings Farm, Ockham, near Guildford in Surrey. A bridleway ran close to the farm buildings. She had applied to the county council for a diversion order in 1988 and had agreed to pay the council's costs of advertising the order and diverting the bridleway.

The council had resolved to promote the diversion and notice of the proposed Bridleway No 29 (Part) Ockham Public Path Diversion Order 1991 had been given in April 1991. In May 1994 an objector had come forward, who agreed with the council's rights of way officer that the matter should be dealt with by written representations.

Mrs Slot had written to the council asking whether she should sent her written representations to the council or to the Department of the Environment.

The council had replied that the written procedure involved only the planning inspectorate, the objector to the order and the council as highway authority. A second letter from the council informed her that any particular points she wished to make should be sent for inclusion in the council's submissions.

In his Lordship's view those letters were misleading. While it was true that the owner of the land who wished the diversion order to be made was not a party to the proceedings, the question was whether she was a person entitled to be heard.

In June 1995, Mrs Slot had asked the department for copies of the inspector's decision and of the objector's letter. The department had replied making clear that in its opinion, Mrs Slot had no right to make any representations. The inspector decided in August 1995 not to confirm the order.

Mrs Slot had not been given an opportunity to make representations to the inspector, although she wrote to him asking to be allowed to do so and she had no knowledge of the case against the diversion made by the objector.

Mr Lewis had submitted that Mrs Slot was a party to the written representation procedure and accordingly entitled to make representations and to receive copies of relevant documents. He also submitted that in failing to provide her with an opportunity to be heard or to make representations there was a breach of natural justice.

In his Lordship's judgment the word "representation" had to be read in conjunction with the word "objection". In the context of the relevant legislation the representation must relate to an issue which had arisen as to confirmation of the order.

If a person made a representation in the context of an opposed order, even if that representation was in support of the order, that person had to be given the opportunity to be heard either at the local inquiry or by an inspector appointed for the purpose.

On natural justice there was only one conclusion in the light of the authorities. Mrs Slot was the proprietor of the property through which the bridleway ran. As such she had a greater interest in the outcome of the application than anyone else. She was the applicant for the diversion order and had been required to pay some of the costs of making the original order.

If one posed the question as to whether the public in general or Mrs Slot would take the view that justice had not been seen to be done if she was denied an opportunity of answering the objections to the making of the order, the answer must be a resounding "No". There must also be a risk that her case was prejudiced.

The appeal would be allowed, the inspector's decision would be quashed and the application for confirmation of the diversion order re-determined.

Lord Justice Hirst agreed and Sir Brian Neill dissented in part but concurred in the result.

Solicitors: Davies Blunden & Evans, Farnborough; Treasury Solicitor.

Harassment Act misused over protesters

Huntingdon Life Sciences Ltd v Curtin and Others

Before Mr Justice Eady

[Judgment November 28]

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 was not intended to be used to restrict those who were exercising their right to protest about a matter of public interest.

Mr Justice Eady so stated in the Queen's Bench Division when allowing an application by the third defendants, the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, to vary an injunction, granted by Lord Justice Schiemann sitting in the Court of Appeal on October 15, 1997 restraining the third defendants among others from harassing the plaintiffs, by removing the third defendants' name from it.

Mr Peter Roth, QC and Miss Jessica Simor for the defendants; Mr Timothy Lawson-Cruttenden, solicitor, for the plaintiffs.

MR JUSTICE EADY said that the plaintiffs, a company which undertook research on animals, had been granted an ex parte injunction against the defendants, among others, restraining them from any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

The plaintiffs had complained of a sustained and menacing anti-vivisection campaign directed at itself and its employees, which included many breaches of section 1 of the 1997 Act.

In the light of evidence adduced by the defendants for the first time at the inter partes hearing, the plaintiffs' allegations could not be sustained and the defendants' application would be granted.

His Lordship went on to say that the legislators of the Act would no doubt be surprised to see how widely its terms were perceived to extend by some people.

The 1997 Act was clearly not intended by Parliament to be used to clamp down on the discussion of matters of public interest or upon the rights of political protest and public demonstration which was so much a part of our democratic tradition.

His Lordship had little doubt that the courts would resist any wide interpretation of the Act as and when the occasion arose.

It was unfortunate that the terms in which the provisions of the Act were couched were seen to sanction any such restrictions.

Solicitors: Mr John Cooper, Southwark; Lawson-Cruttenden & Co.

Vehicle and trailer combined weight test was wrong

National Trailer and Towing Association Ltd v Director of Public Prosecutions

Before Lord Justice Pill and Mr Justice Garland

[Judgment November 11]

Justices erred in concluding that a vehicle drawing a trailer was a goods vehicle within the meaning of section 95(2)(b)(i) of the Transport Act 1968 on the basis that their combined weight exceeded 3,500 kilograms.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held in allowing an appeal brought by way of case stated by the National Trailer and Towing Association Ltd, as a party aggrieved by the conviction by Andover Justices on February 14, 1997 of Bernard Peter Cowley and Lindsays Ltd of using a vehicle when there was no recording equipment installed contrary to section 97(1)(a)(i) of the Transport Act 1968.

Section 95 of the 1968 Act provides: "(2) This Part of this Act applies to ... (b) ... (i) ... any motor vehicle so constructed that a trailer may by partial superimposition be attached to the vehicle in such a manner as to cause a substantial part of the weight of the trailer to be borne by the vehicle."

Section 97, as substituted by regulation 2(1) of the Passenger and Goods Vehicles (Recording Equipment) Regulations (SI 1979 No 1746) and the Passenger and Goods Vehicles (Recording Equipment) (Amendment) Regulations (SI 1984 No 144) provides: "(1) No person shall use ... a vehicle to which this section applies — (a) unless there is in the vehicle recording equipment which (i) has been installed in accordance with the Community recording equipment regulation."

Mr David Lamming for the appellant; Mr Jonathan Fuller for the prosecution.

MR JUSTICE GARLAND said that the appellant was a party interested in the informations preferred by the prosecution and had applied to the justices "to state a case pursuant to section 111 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980.

The justices found that Mr Cowley was driving a Daihatsu vehicle weighing 2,550kg towing a trailer weighing 2,600kg carrying a Hyundai car. He was driving the Daihatsu for commercial purposes in that he was delivering the Hyundai for Lindsays Ltd of Southbourne.

The Daihatsu and the trailer belonged to Mr Cowley who was engaged as a self-employed contractor to transport the Hyundai. The trailer was connected by a ball type fitting to a towbar on the Daihatsu. The Daihatsu was not fitted with a tachograph.

The justices were of the opinion that the Daihatsu was a goods vehicle within the meaning of section 95(2)(b)(i) of the 1968 Act and should have been fitted with the appropriate recording equipment. ... They ... convicted ... both defendants.

The prosecution had not called any evidence concerning the weight of the trailer superimposed or transferred to the Daihatsu.

Evidence for the defendants was that a "fifth wheel" was required before a trailer could be partially superimposed so as to cause a substantial part of the weight of the trailer to be borne by the vehicle. However, the justices did not state that as a finding of fact but merely recorded it as a summary of the argument.

The question was whether the justices were correct to conclude that the Daihatsu when drawing a trailer was a goods vehicle within the meaning of section 95(2)(b)(i) of the 1968 Act where their combined weight exceeded 3,500kg and therefore required a tachograph by virtue of article 3 of the Community recording equipment regulation (EEC/3821/85) (OJ 1985 L370/8).

It was now conceded by the prosecution that that question had to be answered in the negative. The justices had made no findings of fact and merely recited the arguments of both sides.

The prosecution had endeavoured to argue that the attachment of the trailer to the Daihatsu turned the Daihatsu into a vehicle adapted to carry goods within the meaning of section 95(2)(b)(ii). In his Lordship's judgment that was an untenable argument.

There was an absence of findings of fact on which to found the justices' decision and no finding as to whether or not the vehicle was constructed or adapted for the carriage of goods.

It was incumbent on prosecuting authorities to ensure that they addressed their minds to the correct sections of Acts and correct regulations and if necessary called expert or other evidence. In the present case, there was no evidence as to the transfer of weight.

At paragraph 5 of the case stated the justices stated that they were given advice by their legal adviser that the issue hinged on whether or not the Daihatsu could be regarded as a goods vehicle within the meaning of the Transport Act 1968. However, they went on to say that they were referred to Community Regulations EEC/3821/85 and EEC/3820/85 (OJ 1985 L370/1).

It was a possible inference that the justices had confused the EC Regulations with the Act and drew on definitions from the regulations rather than concentrating of the definition of a goods vehicle in section 95(2)(b)(i).

So far as Lindsays were concerned the prosecution conceded that their conviction could not stand either. They had been charged, on amendment, with using the vehicle which, given the finding that Mr Cowley was an independent contractor, could not stand.

Lord Justice Pill delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Barker Gotelee, Ipswich; Crown Prosecution Service, Basingstoke.

Time to reconsider animal law

Isted v Crown Prosecution Service

Before Lord Justice Brooke and Mr Justice Gage

[Judgment October 16]

It was desirable for the Law Commission to consider the relationship between two offences which could be charged for injuring an animal so that the law on animate property could be expressed in clear, intelligible modern language.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court dismissed an appeal by Mark Francis Isted by case stated against his conviction by Chichester Justices on February 17, 1997 of an offence of cruelty to an animal contrary to section 1(1) of the Protection of Animals Act 1911.

Mr Simon Medland for the defendant; Mr James Turner for the prosecution.

LORD JUSTICE BROOKE said that the case, in which the defendant had shot and injured a neighbour's dog which had been worrying his livestock, had highlighted an anomaly in the law.

The problem was that section 1(1) of the 1911 Act, under which the defendant had been convicted of cruelty was framed in antique language using words like "wantonly or unreasonably" which was bound to give trouble to those concerned with the administration of the law.

On the other hand, the Criminal Damage Act 1971, under which the defendant could also have been changed, was framed in modern, intelligible language, and had, in section 5 a concept of "lawful excuse" which was more generous to the defendant than the 1911 Act.

In his Lordship's judgment, it would be desirable for the Law Commission to consider, when its resources permitted, the relationship between the two Acts.

Even if the policy of the law relating to damaged animals was different from that relating to inanimate property, it was surely high time that the policy was expressed in clear, intelligible modern language.

Mr Justice Gage agreed.

Solicitors: Fletcher & Co, Aldershot; Crown Prosecution Service, Chichester.

Correction

In *Postermobile plc v Brent London Borough Council* (*The Times* December 8) the solicitors for the council were Trivedy & Virdi, Harrow.

Breaches must be specified

Alliance Paper Group plc v Prestwich

It was wrong for a judge to enter judgment for damages for breach of contract to be assessed without making specific findings as to what breaches had or had not occurred.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hobhouse, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Mummery) so stated on November 4, dismissing an appeal by John Anthony Russell Prestwich against the order of Judge Levy, QC, sitting as a deputy High Court judge at Southwark on May 13, 1996 that the plaintiffs were entitled, on an assessment of damages for breach of contract, to pursue a claim for damages for breach of restrictive employment covenants not limited to findings of breach previously found in support of the grant of a final injunction to restrain breaches of covenant by the defendant.

LORD JUSTICE HOBHOUSE said that having granted the final injunction, the judge had entered judgment for the plaintiffs for damages for breach of contract to be assessed. Such an order could be used in both Queen's Bench and Chancery Divisions under Order 37 of the Rules of the Supreme Court.

But it was essential that judges entering such a judgment should make specific findings as to what breaches had occurred otherwise the judge assessing damages would not know what he was dealing with. Such orders should not be made when it was inappropriate to do so.

European Law Report Luxembourg

French Republic condemned over farmers' blockades

Commission of the European Communities, supported by Kingdom of Spain and United Kingdom v French Republic

Case C-265/95

Before G. C. Rodríguez Iglesias, President and Judges C. Gulmann, H. Ragnemalm, M. Wathelet, R. Schintgen, G. F. Mancini, J. C. Moitinho de Almeida, P. J. G. Kapteyn, J. L. Murray, D. A. O. Edward, J.-P. Puissochet, G. Hirsch and P. Jann

Advocate General C. O. Lenz

(Opinion July 9)

[Judgment December 9]

By failing to adopt appropriate measures to prevent farmers and others from violently obstructing the free movement of fruit and vegetables, the French Republic had failed to fulfil its obligations under article 30 of the EC Treaty, in conjunction with article 5.

The Court of Justice of the European Communities so held in an action by the Commission under article 169 of the Treaty.

Article 5 of the Treaty provides: "Member states shall take all appropriate measures ... to ensure fulfilment of the obligations arising out of this Treaty. ..."

Article 30 provides: "Quantitative restrictions on imports and all measures having equivalent effect shall ... be prohibited between member states."

In its judgment the European Court of Justice held:

The Commission stated that for more than a decade it had regularly received complaints about the passivity of the French authorities in the face of violent acts by private individuals, and protest movements of French farmers, directed against agricultural products from other member states.

Those acts consisted, inter alia, in the interception of lorries transporting such products in France and the destruction of their loads, violence against lorry drivers, threats against French supermarkets selling agricultural products originating in other member states, and the damaging of those goods when displayed in shops in France.

In particular, as from 1993 certain groupings of French farmers, including an organisation known as "Co-ordination Rurale," had undertaken a systematic campaign to restrict the supply of agricultural products from other member states.

The Commission had raised the matter on several occasions with the French Government, which replied, inter alia, that it had always strongly condemned acts of vandalism by French farmers. The Commission eventually brought the present action for a declaration in August 1995.

The free movement of goods was one of the fundamental principles of the Treaty, and article 30 was intended to eliminate all barriers, whether direct or indirect, actual or potential, to flows of imports in intra-Community trade. That article required member states not merely themselves to abstain from adopting measures or engaging in conduct liable to constitute an obstacle to trade, but also, when read with article 5, to take all necessary and appropriate measures to ensure that that fundamental freedom was respected on their territory.

The facts giving rise to the action were not in dispute, and the acts complained of unquestionably created obstacles to intra-Community trade. The question was whether the French Government had adopted adequate and appropriate measures.

Since its first formal letter to the French Republic in May 1985, the Commission had communicated with the French Government on numerous occasions; the French authorities had therefore had ample time to adopt measures to ensure compliance with their obligations under Community law.

Nevertheless, serious incidents of violence and vandalism had continued to take place regularly. It was not denied that when such incidents occurred the French police were either not present, despite having been warned of the imminence of demonstrations by farmers in certain cases, or did not intervene, even when they far outnumbered the perpetrators of the disturbances.

Further, it was undisputed that a number of acts of vandalism were filmed by television cameras, that the demonstrators' faces were often not covered, and that the groups of farmers responsible for the violent demonstrations were known to the police.

Despite that, only a very small number of participants in serious breaches of public order had been prosecuted: with respect to numerous acts of vandalism committed between April and August 1993, the French authorities had been able to cite only a single case of criminal prosecution.

The Court therefore could not but find that the French Government had manifestly not taken adequate measures to ensure freedom of trade by preventing and effectively dissuading the perpetrators of the offences from committing and repeating them.

That finding was all the more compelling in that the damage and threats not only affected the importation into or transit in France of the products directly affected, but also were such as to create a climate of insecurity which had a deterrent effect on trade flows as a whole.

The finding was not affected by the argument that the situation of French farmers was so difficult that there were reasonable grounds for fearing that more determined action might provoke violent reactions which would lead to still more serious breaches of public order or even to social conflict.

Apprehension of internal difficulties could not justify a failure by a member state to apply Community law correctly, and it was for member states to guarantee the full scope and effect of that law, to ensure its proper implementation in the interests of all economic operators, unless the state could show that action by it would have consequences for public order with which it could not cope.

The French Government had adduced no concrete evidence proving the existence of a danger to public order with which it could not cope. Moreover, although it was not impossible that the threat of serious disruption to public order might, in appropriate cases, justify non-intervention by the police, that argument could only be put forward with respect to a specific incident, and not, as in the present case, in a general way covering all the incidents cited.

Further arguments which could not be accepted were that the French Republic had assumed responsibility for loss caused to victims, as the provision of such compensation did not mean that the member state had fulfilled its obligations; that there were difficulties in the French fruit and vegetable market after the accession of Spain, as economic grounds could never justify barriers prohibited by article 30; and that destabilisation of the French fruit and vegetable market had been brought about by unfair practices or infringements of Community law by Spanish producers, as a member state could not unilaterally adopt protective measures to obviate a breach by another state of rules of Community law: Case C-5/94 *R v Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Ex parte Hedley Lomas (Ireland) Ltd* (*The Times* June 6, 1996; [1997] QB 139; [1996] ECR I-2553, paragraph 20).

In the sphere of the common agricultural policy, it was for the Community alone to adopt, if necessary, measures required to deal with difficulties which some economic operators might be experiencing, in particular following a new accession.

For those reasons, it was to be concluded that the French Government had manifestly and persistently abstained from adopting appropriate and adequate measures to put an end to the acts of vandalism which jeopardised the free movement on its territory of certain agricultural products originating in other member states and prevent the recurrence of such acts.

On those grounds, the Court of Justice declared that by failing to adopt all necessary and proportionate measures in order to prevent the free movement of fruit and vegetables from being obstructed by actions by private individuals, the French Republic had failed to fulfil its obligations under article 30 of the EC Treaty, in conjunction with article 5 of that Treaty, and under the common organisations of the markets in agricultural products.

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Bag carriers take their final turn in the literary spotlight

by John Hopkins

THERE have been *enough* books by and about caddies recently to fill a golf bag — and not one of those pencil-thin versions either, but a proper tournament bag. The offerings this year are surely the last, because it is hard to imagine that they could be bettered or that there can be anything more that has not been said already.

Lawrence Donegan's *Four-iron In The Soul* has been reviewed in these pages, so it is sufficient to say it is one of the best books ever. Fizzing along with the force of a perfectly struck one-iron, it deserves to be considered as the sports book of the year, not merely as the outstanding golf book of the year.

Norman Dabell has a justifiable reputation as a writer and broadcaster with a secondary reputation for his ability to land himself in scrapes. He seems to be making a bid to corner the market in books to do with caddies. His latest is about caddies and the Ryder Cup, as his previous was about caddies and the Open Championship.

Writing in the first person is often thought to be the easiest form of writing. You just tape record what the person says and transcribe it. In fact, it is as difficult a craft as any other form of writing and should be approached as such: that is, with extreme care and a great deal of work. Well thought out and good as this book is, it could have been better with a little more of everything — more research, more time spent on the writing and more editing. But that could be said about most books.

Another genre that threatens to overrun golf enthusiasts is the book about a golfing journey, either spiritual or factual. Michael Murphy started it with his wonderful *Golf in the Kingdom* 20 years ago. Michael Bamberger's account of travelling and caddying on the European Tour a few years ago was even subtitled *A Golfing Oddity*.

James Dodson's idea was to take a trip with his father through England and France, where Dodson Sr discovered golf as an airman in the Second World War. This is an evocative, moving book about a father and son relationship that could have been mawkish and continually hit the wrong note; skilfully, this writer never seems to. The golf is incidental, merely the vehicle for telling a story about a wonderful relationship.

Years ago, Keith Mackie edited the best golf magazine before drifting into the mainstream of golf journalism. Since then, he has produced a number of good books. His latest, *Open Championship Golf Courses of Britain*, is typically authoritative, thorough and well illustrated.

Many of today's players will not be aware of how good some members of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society have been down the years. In their lovingly created book to mark the society's centenary, Peter Bathurst and John Behrend have done a great service in preserving the memories of a unique society and its members. Anyone who understands amateur golf will understand why this book is wonderful reading.

The Complete Book of Golf, which is a lavish, coffee-table book, with a fascinating chapter about caddies, suffers from the portentous opening words of its blurb. Here, and indeed on its title page, the book is described as "an unrivalled collection of writing and photography on the world's fastest growing sport". No book can live up to such overblown nonsense, not even this one.

☐ *Four-iron In The Soul*, by Lawrence Donegan (Viking, £15.99).
☐ *How We Won The Ryder Cup — The Caddies' Stories*, by Norman Dabell (Mainstream Publishing, £15.99).
☐ *The Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society — 100 Years of Serious Fun*, edited by Peter Bathurst and John Behrend (Grant Books, Cutnall Green, Kidderminster, Worcestershire).
☐ *Open Championship Golf Courses of Great Britain*, by Keith Mackie (Aurum Press, £25).
☐ *Final Rounds*, by James Dodson (Century, £12.99).
☐ *The Complete Book of Golf* (Andre Deutsch, £25).

Life and legend of the best ever

CYCLING

by Peter Bryan

EVERY decade throws up a "best ever" cyclist, but in the past hundred years, few have deserved the public's accolade of *campionissimo* — champion of champions — more than Fausto Coppi, of Italy.

The translation this year from the French of Jean-Paul Ollivier's book chronicles Coppi's successes (world road and track champion and victories in the Tour de France and Giro d'Italia) the broken bones, broken marriage and, finally, his death.

Coppi's career spanned the 21 years from 1938 to 1959; he won 138 races on the road and 84 of the 95 individual track pursuits he contested. Yet his hallmark was not the winning, but the manner in which he won. He was the master of the solo breakaway, never hesitating to attack, even though it could mean 100 kilometres of lone riding to the finish.

Just as Coppi's rivalry with Gino Bartali split Italian sports followers so, later, did his private life. Married and a father, he became involved with Giula Locatelli, otherwise known as the "woman in white", the wife of a doctor and mother of two, whose original distant fan worship of the champion developed into romance. Italy was shocked when the scandal was revealed — it was the 1950s, remember.

Coppi died on January 2, 1960 from malaria after a series of exhibition races in the African republic of Burkina Faso. The book omits to mention the Italian's races in London, Dublin and the Isle of Man and leaves untold whether Faustino, his son by Locatelli, followed in his father's wheelmarks.

☐ *Fausti Coppi: The True Story* by Jean-Paul Ollivier (Sport & Publicity for Bromley Books, £15.99).

Times writers cast their eyes over the best sporting books of the year

Scruffy scribe's smart move into print

FOOTBALL

by Nick Szczepanik

MICHAEL STEELE

First-class Claridge: the Leicester forward hits the big time with the winning goal in the 1997 Coca-Cola Cup final replay

THESE days, bookshop shelves groan under the weight of "football writing" — a far cry from the days when the market only consisted of a few ghosted players' autobiographies. That said, the pro's story remains a staple, and 1997 has seen one or two memorable additions to the canon.

Tales From The Boot Camps, by Steve Claridge and Ian Ridley, tells the engaging tale of the man described as *the scruffiest player in Britain*. As far from the preening, part-time male model as it is possible to get, Claridge, a gambling addict, carries a bag of old boots around, from which he selects two — not necessarily a pair — to play in. But in true rags to riches tradition, his career, spent mostly with lower-division clubs, has blossomed at Leicester City, in whose annals he has a permanent place: his goals won the club its coveted FA Carling Premiership place and the 1997 Coca-Cola Cup. Ridley narrates, Claridge remembers.

Brian McClair's *Odd Man Out* is somewhat the reverse: a wry diary of life at Manchester United from the point of view of a man who no longer commands a first-team place, while his more glamorous team-mates capture every trophy in sight. McClair, who regards his decision to remain *at Old Trafford as "a token of* my ambition and not the sign of a lack of it," calls himself "atypical"; any player who uses such a word and writes on his own laptop certainly deserves the description.

The player's diary, of course, has become a sub-genre of its own since Garry Nelson's *Left Foot Forward*. *The follow-up is an even more* downbeat tale of Nelson's first (and, so far, only) season as a coach, at Torquay United. Early-season optimism gives way to disillusionment as the reality of working with limited resources — human as well as financial — sets in. As much a consideration of the state of football in the late Nineties as *of any one club, Left Foot In The Grave?* marks an interesting progression from his first outing in print.

Now that he of the vertical collar has retired, we may get a rest from the endless succession of Eric Cantona hagiographies. Many will prefer to remember him as the subject of *The Meaning of Cantona*, a hilariously surreal deconstruction of the legend, and the only book in this selection to contain the immortal line: "Irony is killing football." Subtitled *Meditations on Life, Art and Perfectly Weighted Balls*, it is worthy of the man's own Eurostar commercials.

If you are keen to follow Eric down the tunnel, *European Football — A Fans' Handbook*, from The Rough Guide series, is an invaluable handbook containing information on who to watch, how to get there and get in, and where to eat, drink and sleep before and after the match. Oh yes, and where to get hold of the Vauxhall Conference results the next day.

Finally, anyone who feels that too much has already been written about a game whose spectacle usually speaks for itself could do worse than ask Santa for *More Than Ninety Minutes*, Stewart Weir's sombre black and white elegy for Brighton and Hove Albion, with words by Paul Hayward, in a limited edition of 5,625 (one for every penny paid by Bill Archer, the chairman, for control of the club) or *Visions of Football*, which describes itself as a celebration of the world's finest football photography.

☐ *Tales From The Boot Camps*, by Steve Claridge with Ian Ridley (Gollancz, £16.99; Vista, paperback, £5.99 *).
☐ *Odd Man Out*, by Brian McClair (Andre Deutsch, £14.99).
☐ *Left Foot In The Grave?*, by Garry Nelson (Collins Willow, £14.99).
☐ *The Meaning Of Cantona* ,by Terence Blacker and William Donaldson (Mainstream, £9.99).
☐ *European Football — A Fans' Handbook*, by Peterjon Cresswell and Simon Evans (The Rough Guides, £14.99).
☐ *More Than Ninety Minutes*, by Stewart Weir and Paul Hayward (More Than Ninety Minutes, £21.95).
☐ *Visions Of Football*, edited by Allsport (Andre Deutsch, £14.99).
* *Updated to include Coca-Cola Cup victory.*

McCoy's tales of truancy reveal secret of class act

by Richard Evans

THE idea that any sportsman can achieve enough by the age of 23 to warrant an autobiography might seem a shade preposterous. Add the fact that the sport concerned involves the macho world of National Hunt racing and it is surely incredulous. Well, not quite.

Tony McCoy's impact has been nothing short of phenomenal. In his first full season, 1995-96, he became the youngest champion jockey since 1962. He retained the title last season, during which he won the Champion Hurdle and Gold Cup at Cheltenham, and this term he is already 60 winners ahead of his nearest rival, having smashed Peter Scudamore's record for the fastest 100 wins in a season.

The remarkable success story needed explaining and McCoy, in co-operation with Claude Duval, the racing correspondent of *The Sun*, has produced a revealing and enjoyable account called, inevitably, *The Real McCoy — My Life So Far*.

Well-researched and presented, the book will be meat and drink to most punters and racegoers. However, there is also a lesson for any budding sports star that parents will dread. McCoy's passion for ponies and horses meant that he was regularly skipping school at 11 so that he could go and help out in a local yard. In his case, it paid off handsomely, but for every McCoy there are a thousand star-struck youngsters heading for a cul-de-sac rather than the winner's enclosure.

The enclosure which every owner, trainer and jockey dreams of entering is at Epsom on Derby Day. *The Derby Stakes 1780-1997* is a magnificent tome dedicated to the horses that have made it there since the race was first won by Diomed.

It took Michael Church four years to complete this labour of love, but the end product is the finest reference work produced on the most famous Flat race in the world. Sold only as a numbered edition of 1,314, which represents six dedications to each of the 218 Derby winners, it contains a short essay on every Derby, the full result, a five-generation pedigree of the winner plus a host of other detail and 300 illustrations. Expensive, but priceless — and a must for dedicated followers of the Turf.

The Racing Man's Bedside Book fulfils an entirely different role, but is no less enjoyable. It is a compilation of some of the best writing about horses, owners, trainers, jockeys and the great racing festivals. The deeds of racing's heroes — and colourful characters — sit neatly side by side and range in style from those of Dick Francis and Jeffrey Bernard to Rudyard Kipling and the incomparable Hugh McIlvanney.

Julian Bedford has also included a characteristically perceptive essay from *Racehorses of 1960*, the Timeform annual. The Timeform organisation has done more than most to cover the great deeds and defining moments in British racing via its annuals. Now, it has drawn on the best material over the past half-century to produce *Favourite Racehorses*. The 368 pages and 350 photographs not only offer remarkably good value but also give readers a memorable reminder of equine heroes such as Tudor Minstrel, Sea Bird II, Ribot, Brigadier Gerard and, more recently, Shergar and Dancing Brave, as well as Arkle, Desert Orchid and Red Rum.

Apart from generating a surfeit of words, racing is often responsible for beautiful and moving photographs. Trevor Jones and George Selwyn have joined forces to produce *The Spirit of Racing*. This photographic portrait of the horse-racing world deserves a place on most coffee tables.

☐ *The Real McCoy — My Life So Far* (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99).
☐ *The Derby Stakes 1780-1997*, by Michael Church (Racing Post Publications, £72).
☐ *The Racing Man's Bedside Book*, compiled by Julian Bedford (Colt Books, £18.95).
☐ *Favourite Racehorses*, by Timeform (Portway Press Ltd, £30).
☐ *The Spirit of Racing* (Kensington West Productions, £16.99).

Offiah's story has enduring appeal

by Christopher Irvine

IN A sport where all the autobiographies laid out would not extend across a pair of goalposts, it is a measure of Martin Offiah's achievements that he can command a second detailed account of his life.

The latest version, four years after the last one, incorporates his aborted return to rugby union. His stated ambition of an England cap never got off the ground at Bedford, where his clashes with Geoff Cooke, the former England manager, interrupt the scoring feats that form the basis of Offiah's story.

It is beyond the game's parochial enclaves that Offiah's talents have always been more fully celebrated. Ask anyone to name a rugby league player and Offiah would be the choice nine times out of ten. Flying wings are an enduring fascination and no player in modern times has flown as fast, nor with his precision.

Robert Gate's superbly detailed and well-illustrated account of Ashes series between Great Britain and Australia since 1908 provides an invaluable addition to the game's library by its official historian.

It does not encompass Britain's 2-1 defeat in the recent series held under the Super League banner, which is fully documented in *Super League 97-98*, the excellent annual publication of the season. Alongside *Rothmans Yearbook*, rugby league has never been better served with statistical information.

☐ *Offiah: My Autobiography*, by Martin Offiah with David Lawrenson (Collins Willow, £15.99).
☐ *The Struggle for the Ashes II. The History of Anglo-Australian Rugby League Test Matches*, by Robert Gate (Robert Gate, £12.99).
☐ *Super League 97-98*, by Tim Butcher and Graham Clay (League Publications, £12.99).

Distilled to perfection

FISHING

by Brian Clarke

IT IS nearly two years since the high priest of salmon and sea trout fishing, Hugh Falkus, died. Many will have thought they had seen the last from the master's pen.

However, ill and struggling with a project that he knew he could not complete alone, Falkus sought help from one of the close band of friends he knew as trustees.

Thanks to this utterly typical realism, we now have *The Salmon and Sea Troutfisher's Handbook*. This posthumous work is a distillation of his two great angling bibles, *Sea Trout Fishing* (1975) and *Salmon Fishing* (1984). It is a model of compression.

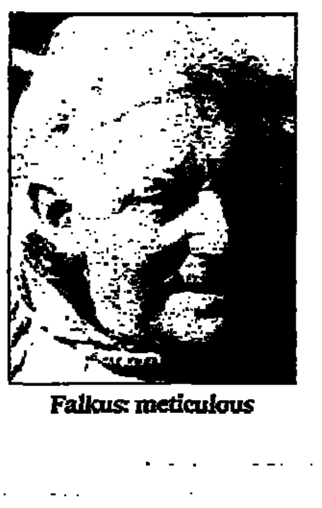
All the essential Falkus is there — the philosophical premise, natural history, tackle and tactics. It is a compliment to his co-author, Malcolm Greenhalgh, to say that the meticulous Falkus would have been well pleased.

The read of the year is *The Best of Zane Grey*. This collectors' volume sells at £95, is fully bound in leather and comes in a slip-case. We stand alongside the romance of the Wild West as he pursues swordfish, tuna, tarpon and the like.

The Medlar Press is a relative newcomer to the thriving collectors' market. Its latest offering is *Old Father Thames*, by Peter Stone. His *reminiscences* — not great literature, but they do take us into the mind of one of the finest of postwar all-rounders — come in cloth at £48.50 and leather at £98.50.

White Lion Books, which not so long ago brought out a new edition of Negley Farson's *Going Fishing*, have followed with a minor classic that could not be more different. *Confessions of a Carp Fisher* by BB [Denys Watkins-Pitchford] explores the psychology of carp angling before the sport became overrun by chest-beaters and technology.

Among new texts, *Tight Lines* by Chapman Pincher is a brisk, no-nonsense tour of the famous spymaster's accumulated angling beliefs. There is bags of information but the book will struggle at £25.



Falkus: meticulous

Best of the rest? *Matching the Hatch* by Pat O'Reilly steers the author through the entomological jungle with clarity. *Distant Waters* is a coffee-table vehicle for the images of round-the-world angler and photographer Valentine Atkinson. While beautifully written, it did leave me with a sense of glut.

The antidote is *Fish of Britain and Europe* by Peter J. Miller, with paintings by the excellent Michael J. Loates. This is not strictly an angling book, but it has a clear and relevant priority. It is, as Mr Blair might say, information, information, information.

☐ *The Salmon and Sea Troutfisher's Handbook*, by Hugh Falkus and Malcolm Greenhalgh (Excellent Press, £17.95).
☐ *The Best of Zane Grey*, edited by Tom Fort (The Flyfishers Classic Library, £95).
☐ *Old Father Thames*, by Peter Stone (The Medlar Press, £48.50 and £98.50).
☐ *Confessions of a Carp Fisher*, by BB (White Lion Books, £20).
☐ *Tight Lines*, by Chapman Pincher (Robert Hale, £25).
☐ *Matching the Hatch*, by Pat O'Reilly (Swan Hill, £12.95).
☐ *Distant Waters*, by Valentine Atkinson (Mitchell Beazley, £25).
☐ *Fish of Britain and Europe*, by Peter J. Miller (Collins Pocket Guide series, £12.99).

When a call of 'sir' meant submission

by John Goodbody

WHEN a novelist of the calibre of the American, John Irving, turns his attention to sport, you can be certain of an intriguing result. The memoir of his experiences in wrestling, *The Imaginary Girlfriend*, is probably the finest sports book to be published in Britain since *Fever Pitch* and *Haunts of the Black Masseur — the Swimmer as Hero* six years ago. All have an elliptical approach to their subjects.

The only thing that will prevent Irving's work from receiving widespread critical acclaim in this country is that amateur wrestling is not part of the consciousness of many Britons.

Here are the hopes and fears of any athlete in serious competition told with graphic realism. We follow Irving through his career, how he failed to secure New England championship titles, but how he coached two of his sons to win them.

Irving knows his competitive career is over when he is called "sir" by a fellow wrestler. He writes: "He meant no harm. But the damage was done. He was probably *24* and I was 34, but when he called me 'sir' I felt older than I feel now, at 53."

The importance of the mind is central to Irving's book and this is explored more clinically by Brian Miller, who has been at the forefront of psychological sport, in *Gold Minds*. He has worked with members of the British and Australian Olympic teams and has been much appreciated by both individual competitors and officials.

The book carefully lays out how to prepare mentally for training and events, how to deal with the anxiety of competition. It is a work every serious sportsman or woman should have.

The BBC Radio 5 Live Sports Year Book is an invaluable annual. Edited by Peter Nichols, it deserves the epithet of indispensable.

☐ *The Imaginary Girlfriend*, by John Irving (Black Swan, £6.99).
☐ *Gold Minds*, by Brian Miller (The Crowood Press, £12.99).
☐ *The Radio 5 Live Sports Year Book 1998*, edited by Peter Nichols (Oddball, £12.99).

Capturing golden age

by Srikumar Sen

THOSE who are tired of reading about the meaningless contests that now pass for world championships and who long for the sport to return to the values of the past, when the best faced the best, will be delighted with the collection of essays in paperback by Budd Schulberg, entitled *Sparring with Hemingway*.

The author of several novels and screenplays, which include *The Harder they Fall* and *Waterfront*, Schulberg, now in his seventies, has been watching boxing since he was 16. The book covers his writings in various publications, such as *Esquire*, *Saturday Review*, *Newsday*, *Playboy* and others over the past 25 years.

He never misses an important event, even today. His reports are greatly valued by boxing writers. He can be relied on to give you a new perspective on the contest, even on the great fights of the past. My favourites in this collection are *Sparring with Hemingway*, *The Great Benny Leonard* and *The Second Coming of George Foreman*.

Those who dislike Hemingway's boastful ways will enjoy his deflation in the verbal contest with Schulberg. Chuckles explode into laughter as Schulberg is backed up against a wall at a mutual friend's house in Key West with the question: "What do you know about boxing for Christ's sweet sake?" — and finally gets the better of the heavyweight.

Schulberg was too small in the great days of Leonard to attend boxing matches. He relied on his father, B. P., to give him reports the next day. He first saw the great Benny Leonard, as the fighter was always referred to in his family, when he was 16. He had told his father, who was then in Hollywood, that he would call him after the contest, but his hero, who was then past his best, was knocked out by Jimmy McLarlin and Schulberg could not bring himself to pick up the phone.

Foreman: return

George Foreman is the son of every boxing movie ever made, according to Schulberg. The fighting preacher disproved F. Scott Fitzgerald's view that "there are no second acts in American lives". Schulberg said: "Not only is the second coming of George Foreman a helluva second act, it has given us a happy ending that you only see in Hollywood fairytales."

A must for those who missed out last year is *The A-Z of World Boxing*, by Bert Blewett. The book is not only extensively researched, but covers boxers of genuine significance and subjects that are more than just trivia.

I believe that it was Groucho Marx who said that he would not join a club that would have him as a member. I felt the same way about *This Bloody Mary is the Last Thing I Own*, by Jonathan Rendall after seeing my name in it. I did not want to go any farther, but Rendall's story of his love affair with boxing and final disillusionment is a good read.

☐ *Sparring with Hemingway*, by Budd Schulberg (Robson Books, £10.99).
☐ *The A-Z of World Boxing*, by Bert Blewett (Robson Books, £22.99).
☐ *This Bloody Mary is the Last Thing I Own*, by Jonathan Rendall (Faber and Faber, £14.99).

هكذا من الإصل

The fun of the cup — and £10,000

Do you have the skill to choose a team and win the FA Cup league?

A £10,000 prize is up for grabs for the winner of the brand-new FA Cup league, a league within the ITF.

Entrants to ITF will automatically score points in the FA Cup league when the players in their team compete in the FA/Tennents Cup rounds. From January 3, English Premiership players will begin the knockout and January 24 sees the start of the Tennents Cup round involving Scottish premier division teams.

This is your chance to choose a team specifically for the FA Cup league. All players start scoring when the cup rounds involving English and Scottish premier divisions begin. All teams will be allocated transfers to use at their own discretion but remember, the sooner you enter the more transfers your team will be allocated. **Any team in the ITF prior to 12 noon on December 13 will automatically receive 20 extra transfers in addition to their current allocation.** Thereafter, all teams will receive 20 transfers for the duration of the season. Postal entries must be received by Tuesday December 30 and telephone entries by 10am on Saturday January 3 in order to score points from the beginning of the FA Cup league competition. **Entrants must be 18 years or over.**

By competing in the FA Cup league, your players will automatically score points for matches played in the English and Scottish premier divisions during the 1997-98 football season as well and, if appropriate, in the mini leagues — students' or women's.

By scoring points in the ITF, your team could win the monthly prizes of £1,000, a signed Mitre football, a Mitre sports bag and a pair of tickets to a premier league match by scoring the most points in any one month. The mini league (student's and women's) also carry monthly prizes.

PREMIERSHIP CLUBS IN FA CUP DRAW

Portsmouth v Aston Villa
Arsenal v Port Vale
Leicester City v Northampton Town or Basingstoke Town
Leeds United v Oxford United
Everton v Newcastle United
Liverpool v Coventry City
West Ham United v Lincoln City or Emley
Derby County v Southampton
Tottenham Hotspur v Fulham
Crystal Palace v Scunthorpe United or Ilkeston Town
Torquay United or Watford v Sheffield Wednesday
Chelsea v Manchester United
Wimbledon v Wrexham
Blackburn Rovers v Wigan Athletic
Barnsley v Bolton Wanderers
Ties to be played on January 3 and 4

ITF Terms and conditions: 1. You must enter through the media channel you wish to play by. 2. Entries must comply with the specifications of the team, as listed right. 3. There is no limit to the number of entries a person or household may make. 4. No responsibility is accepted for late or lost entries due to circumstances beyond our control. Indecipherable, inaudible or incomplete entries are null and void with no refund. The computer's record of the entry will be considered to be the entry. 5. The ITF committee's decision is final regarding all aspects of ITF. 6. Telephone entries and transfers are made by Touch-tone (DTMF) telephones only (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone). 7. Promotional and explanatory copy relating to The Times/The Sunday Times ITF in association with LineOne, the Internet and Sky Sports Interactive. 8. Players values will be reassessed at the end of January and March. 9. Official updated players/managers lists will be published in The Times. 10. The top prize goes to the entrant whose team scores the most points in the FA Cup league. In the event of there being more than one winner, a tiebreak will operate. There are no monthly prizes. 11. The top prize for the main ITF game goes to the entrant whose team scores the most points throughout the 1997-98 football season. There are also second and third place prizes. In the event of there being more than one winner in any of these positions, a tie-break will operate. 12. The manager of the month prize will go to the entrant whose team scores the most points in any one month. This applies to the main ITF game, the mini leagues and the internet league. In the event of there being more than one league winner, a winner will be chosen at random. 13. No team will be eligible to win a prize unless they have abided by the competition rules. 14. Scores will count for the English and Scottish premier division and FA Cup/Tennents Cup (involving English and Scottish premier division teams) matches for the 1997-98 season. 15. Calls for entries should take approximately eight minutes. Calls cost 50p per minute. Calls from pay phones cost approximately double. 16. The competition is not open to employees of News International, BSkyB, their relatives, agents or agents' relatives. 17. If a player or manager moves teams during the season, it may affect the composition of your team. You may adjust your team by using the transfer system to avoid missing out on points. 18. Full explanations on how your players will score points, how to transfer and how to check your score and position in the league are printed every week in The Times. 19. You may also enter a new team by LineOne, the Internet (call 0800 111 210 for details) and by Sky Sports Interactive (Sky Text page 118).

THE ITF FA CUP LEAGUE

£10,000 to the winner

HOW TO PLAY

Study the Cup draw (the Scottish draw will be made in January) and the list of players. Select your team as follows:
You have £35 million to spend on a team of 11 players and a manager.
You must pick 1 goalkeeper, 2 full backs, 2 central defenders, 4 midfielders, 2 strikers and a manager.
You must not pick more than two individuals (two players or one player and a manager) from the same club.
Your team must be made up of 12 individuals at any one time but you may transfer your players in and out of your team as you wish, according to your transfer allocation.
You may enter as many teams as you wish.

HOW TO ENTER BY POST

Once you have selected your team, simply complete the entry form and send it with a cheque or postal order for £2 payable to Times Newspapers to the address on the application form. Entries from outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are £10 sterling and may only be made by post.

HOW TO ENTER BY TELEPHONE

0891 405 011
(Republic of Ireland +44 990 100 308)

Once you have chosen your team, call the entry hotline, using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone) and follow the step-by-step instructions. You must tap in (not speak) the full set of selections (using the five-digit player codes) for each of your 11 chosen players and your manager. You will be asked whether you wish to enter one of the mini leagues (women's or students') if appropriate. If so, do so as directed on the telephone. You must speak the name of your team (no more than 16 characters), your name, address with postcode and your daytime telephone number. Finally, you will be given a ten-digit personal identification number (PIN) at the end of the call. You must keep a note of this number as you will need your PIN for making transfers and checking your team score. (A new team will score points on future games in the ITF and mini league.) Calls last about eight minutes and cost 50p per minute (calls made from a pay phone cost approximately double).

To enter, call

0891 405 011

(Republic of Ireland +44 990 100 308)

HOW TO ENTER YOUR TEAM

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL ENTRANTS

TEAM NAME ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ (Up to 16 characters)

Goalkeeper ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Full back ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Full back ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Central defender ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Central defender ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Midfielder ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Midfielder ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Midfielder ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Midfielder ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Striker ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Striker ☐☐☐☐☐ ______
Manager ☐☐☐☐☐ ______

First Name ______
Surname ______
Address ______
______
Postcode ______ Daytime Tel ______
Cheque / PO No. ______

This year ITF incorporates separate mini leagues. Please tick the correct league(s) for your entry.
☐ Women's League ☐ Student League

Entrants must be 18 or over to play in the ITF league, the Women's league and the Students' league.

Which age group are you? (TICK BOX) 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+ ☐
How often do you read The Sunday Times? Less than once a month ☐ 1-2 times a month ☐ 3-4 times a month ☐
How often do you read The Times? Less than once a week ☐ 1-3 times a week ☐ 4-6 times a week ☐
Do you have a PC at home? Yes ☐ No ☐
If you do not wish to receive other offers from Times Newspapers, please tick box ☐

Send your entry with £2 entry fee (entrants outside the UK or Rep of Ireland £10 sterling) to: The Times Interactive Team Football, Abacus House, Dudley Street, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 1ZZ.

GOALKEEPERS

Code	Name	Team	Price £m
10101	J Leighton	Aberdeen	2.00
10201	D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00
10301	M Bosnich	Aston Villa	3.00
10401	D Watson	Barnsley	1.00
10501	T Flowers	Blackburn Rovers	3.50
10601	K Branagan	Bolton Wanderers	1.50
10701	S Kerr	Celtic	4.00
10702	J Gould	Celtic	3.50
10801	E De Goey	Chelsea	3.00
10901	S Ogrizovic	Coventry City	1.50
11001	C Nash	Crystal Palace	0.25
11002	K Miller	Crystal Palace	2.00
11101	M Poom	Derby County	1.50
11201	S Dykstra	Dundee United	2.00
11301	I Westwater	Dunfermline	1.00
11401	N Southall	Everton	2.00
11501	G Rousset	Hearts	3.50
11601	C Reid	Hibernian	1.50
11602	O Gottskalksson	Hibernian	1.50
11701	D Lekovic	Kilmarnock	1.00
11801	N Martyn	Leeds United	3.50
11901	K Keller	Leicester City	3.00
12001	D James	Liverpool	3.50
12101	P Schmeichel	Manchester United	5.00
12201	S Howie	Motherwell	1.00
12301	S Given	Newcastle United	3.00
12401	A Goram	Rangers	5.00
12501	K Pressman	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
12702	P Jones	Southampton	1.00
12601	A Main	St Johnstone	0.50
12801	I Walker	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50
12901	L Miklosko	West Ham United	2.00
13001	N Sullivan	Wimbledon	2.50

FULL BACKS

Code	Name	Team	Price £m
20201	L Dixon	Arsenal	3.00
20202	N Winterburn	Arsenal	3.00
20203	E Petit	Arsenal	3.00
20301	S Staunton	Aston Villa	2.50
20302	A Wright	Aston Villa	2.50
20303	S Grayson	Aston Villa	2.00
20304	F Nelson	Aston Villa	2.00
20401	N Eaden	Barnsley	0.50
20402	N Thompson	Barnsley	0.50
20403	D Barnard	Barnsley	1.00
20502	J Kenna	Blackburn Rovers	3.00
20503	P Valery	Blackburn Rovers	2.50
20601	N Cox	Bolton Wanderers	2.00
21901	M Whitlow	Bolton Wanderers	1.50
20602	R Elliott	Bolton Wanderers	2.00
20603	J Phillips	Bolton Wanderers	1.00
20701	T Boyd	Celtic	3.50
20702	T McKinlay	Celtic	3.50
20703	J McNamara	Celtic	3.00
20501	G Le Saux	Chelsea	4.00
20801	D Petrescu	Chelsea	4.00
20802	C Babayaro	Chelsea	2.00
20803	F Sinclair	Chelsea	2.00
20901	D Burrows	Coventry City	1.00
20903	M Hall	Coventry City	1.00
20904	R Nilsson	Coventry City	1.00
21001	D Gordon	Crystal Palace	1.50
21002	M Edworthy	Crystal Palace	1.50
21004	J Smith	Crystal Palace	1.50
21101	C Powell	Derby County	1.50
21102	D Yates	Derby County	1.00
21103	G Rowett	Derby County	1.50
21401	A Hinchcliffe	Everton	2.50
21402	E Barrett	Everton	1.50
21403	T Phelan	Everton	1.50
21404	M Ward	Everton	1.50
21501	G Locke	Hearts	1.50
21701	D Kerr	Kilmarnock	1.00
21801	G Kelly	Leeds United	2.50
21802	D Robertson	Leeds United	2.50
21902	S Guppy	Leicester City	2.50
22001	S Bjornebye	Liverpool	3.00
[illegible]	J McAteer	Liverpool	3.00
[illegible]	R Jones	Liverpool	3.00
[illegible]	D Irwin	Manchester United	4.00
22102	G Neville	Manchester United	3.50
22103	P Neville	Manchester United	3.50
22301	S Watson	Newcastle United	3.00
22302	W Barton	Newcastle United	2.00
22303	J Beresford	Newcastle United	2.00
22304	S Pearce	Newcastle United	3.00
22401	A Cleland	Rangers	3.00
22402	S Stensaas	Rangers	3.00
22501	P Blondeau	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
22502	I Nolan	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
22701	J Dodd	Southampton	1.50
22702	F Benali	Southampton	0.75
22703	S Charlton	Southampton	0.75
22801	C Wilson	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
22802	J Edinburgh	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
22803	S Carr	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
22901	J Dicks	West Ham United	3.00
22902	A Impey	West Ham United	1.50
22903	T Breacker	West Ham United	2.00
23001	B Thatcher	Wimbledon	2.00
23002	K Cunningham	Wimbledon	2.00
23003	A Kimble	Wimbledon	2.00

CENTRAL DEFENDERS

Code	Name	Team	Price £m
30101	B O'Neil	Aberdeen	2.00
30201	T Adams	Arsenal	3.00
30202	M Keown	Arsenal	3.00
30203	G Grimandi	Arsenal	2.00
30204	S Bould	Arsenal	3.00
30301	G Southgate	Aston Villa	3.00
30302	U Ehiogu	Aston Villa	3.00
30401	A De Zeeuw	Barnsley	1.00
30402	A Moses	Barnsley	0.50
30403	M Appleby	Barnsley	0.50
30502	C Hendry	Blackburn Rovers	3.00
30504	S Henchoz	Blackburn Rovers	2.50
30505	T Pedersen	Blackburn Rovers	2.00
30601	G Taggart	Bolton Wanderers	1.50
30602	G Bergsson	Bolton Wanderers	1.00
30603	C Fairclough	Bolton Wanderers	1.00
30604	M Fish	Bolton Wanderers	1.50
30701	E Annoni	Celtic	1.50
30702	M MacKay	Celtic	3.00
30703	A Stubbs	Celtic	3.00
30704	M Rieper	Celtic	3.00
30801	F Leboeuf	Chelsea	3.00
30802	M Duberry	Chelsea	3.00
30803	S Clarke	Chelsea	2.50
30804	B Lambourde	Chelsea	2.50
30901	L Daish	Coventry City	1.50
30902	R Shaw	Coventry City	1.50
30903	P Williams	Coventry City	1.50
31001	A Roberts	Crystal Palace	1.50
31002	A Linighan	Crystal Palace	0.75
31003	D Tuttle	Crystal Palace	0.75
31004	H Hreidarsson	Crystal Palace	1.00
31101	I Stimac	Derby County	2.50
31102	J Laursen	Derby County	1.50
31201	S Pressley	Dundee United	2.00
31301	G Shields	Dunfermline	1.50
31401	S Bilic	Everton	2.50
31402	D Watson	Everton	2.00
31404	C Tiler	Everton	1.50
31501	D Weir	Hearts	2.00
31601	J Hughes	Hibernian	2.00
31801	D Wetherall	Leeds United	2.50
31802	G Halle	Leeds United	2.00
31803	R Molenaar	Leeds United	2.00
31804	L Radebe	Leeds United	2.00
31901	M Elliott	Leicester City	3.50
31902	P Kaamark	Leicester City	2.00
31903	S Walsh	Leicester City	2.50
31904	S Prior	Leicester City	2.00
32001	M Wright	Liverpool	3.00
32002	D Matteo	Liverpool	3.00
32003	B Kvarme	Liverpool	3.00
30501	H Berg	Manchester United	3.50
32101	D May	Manchester United	3.50
32102	G Pallister	Manchester United	3.50
32301	P Albert	Newcastle United	2.50
32302	D Peacock	Newcastle United	3.00
32303	S Howey	Newcastle United	2.00
32304	A Pistone	Newcastle United	3.00
32401	S Porrini	Rangers	3.50
32402	J Bjorklund	Rangers	3.50
32403	L Amoruso	Rangers	3.50
32404	R Gough	Rangers	4.00
32501	D Walker	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
32502	J Newsome	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
32503	P Atherton	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
32701	R Dryden	Southampton	1.00
32702	C Lundekvam	Southampton	1.00
32704	K Monkou	Southampton	1.00
32601	S McCluskey	St Johnstone	0.50
32801	S Campbell	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50
32802	J Scales	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50
32803	R Vega	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
32804	C Calderwood	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
32901	R Ferdinand	West Ham United	2.50
32902	R Hall	West Ham United	2.00
31403	D Unsworth	West Ham United	2.00
32903	S Potts	West Ham United	1.50
32904	I Pearce	West Ham United	2.00
33001	C Perry	Wimbledon	2.50
33002	D Blackwell	Wimbledon	2.50

MIDFIELD PLAYERS

Code	Name	Team	Price £m
40101	E Jess	Aberdeen	2.00
40102	P Bernard	Aberdeen	2.00
40201	M Overmars	Arsenal	5.50
40202	P Vieira	Arsenal	3.50
40203	S Hughes	Arsenal	2.00
40204	R Parlour	Arsenal	2.50
40205	D Platt	Arsenal	1.50
40301	M Draper	Aston Villa	3.00
40302	I Taylor	Aston Villa	2.50
40401	N Redfearn	Barnsley	3.00
40402	E Tinkler	Barnsley	2.00
40403	D Sheridan	Barnsley	1.00
40404	M Bullock	Barnsley	0.50
40501	J Wilcox	Blackburn Rovers	3.00
40502	B McKinlay	Blackburn Rovers	3.00
40503	T Sherwood	Blackburn Rovers	3.00
40504	G Flitcroft	Blackburn Rovers	3.00
40601	A Thompson	Bolton Wanderers	2.50
40602	S Sellars	Bolton Wanderers	2.00
40603	P Frandsen	Bolton Wanderers	2.00
40604	M Johansen	Bolton Wanderers	2.00
40605	J Pollock	Bolton Wanderers	2.00
40701	A Thom	Celtic	4.50
40702	P O'Donnell	Celtic	3.00
42503	R Blinker	Celtic	3.00
40704	C Burley	Celtic	3.00
40705	P Lambert	Celtic	3.00
40801	D Wise	Chelsea	3.50
40802	R Di Matteo	Chelsea	4.00
40803	E Newton	Chelsea	1.50
40804	G Poyet	Chelsea	3.00
40901	G McAllister	Coventry City	2.50
40902	T Soltvedt	Coventry City	1.50
40903	J Salako	Coventry City	1.50
40904	P Telfer	Coventry City	1.50
41002	S Rodger	Crystal Palace	1.00
41003	D Pitcher	Crystal Palace	0.25
41004	P Warhurst	Crystal Palace	1.50
41005	A Lombardo	Crystal Palace	3.00
41101	A Asanovic	Derby County	2.50
41102	S Eranio	Derby County	3.50
41103	D Powell	Derby County	1.50
41104	C Dailly	Derby County	1.50
41105	R Van Der Laan	Derby County	1.00
41106	J Hunt	Derby County	1.00
41201	R Winters	Dundee United	3.50
41301	A Smith	Dunfermline	3.50
41401	G Speed	Everton	3.50
41402	J Parkinson	Everton	1.50
41403	G Farrelly	Everton	1.50
41404	D Williamson	Everton	2.00
41405	J Oster	Everton	2.50
41501	N McCann	Hearts	3.50
41601	C Jackson	Hibernian	2.00
41602	B Lavety	Hibernian	2.00
41701	J McIntyre	Kilmarnock	2.00
41001	D Hopkin	Leeds United	3.50
41801	L Bowyer	Leeds United	3.00
41802	A Haaland	Leeds United	2.00
41803	L Sharpe	Leeds United	2.50
41804	B Ribeiro	Leeds United	2.50
41901	G Parker	Leicester City	2.00
41902	N Lennon	Leicester City	2.00
41903	M Izzet	Leicester City	2.00
41904	S Taylor	Leicester City	1.50
42001	S McManaman	Liverpool	6.00
42002	O Leonhardsen	Liverpool	3.00
42003	M Thomas	Liverpool	3.00
42004	J Redknapp	Liverpool	3.00
42006	P Ince	Liverpool	4.00
42101	D Beckham	Manchester United	8.00
42102	R Giggs	Manchester United	7.00
42103	R Keane	Manchester United	5.00
42104	N Butt	Manchester United	4.00
42105	A Cole	Manchester United	7.00
42201	B Davies	Motherwell	2.00
42301	R Lee	Newcastle United	5.00
42302	K Gillespie	Newcastle United	3.50
42303	D Batty	Newcastle United	2.50
42005	J Barnes	Newcastle United	3.00
42401	B Laudrup	Rangers	6.50
42402	P Gascoigne	Rangers	6.00
42403	J Thern	Rangers	3.00
42404	J Albertz	Rangers	4.00
42501	B Carbone	Sheffield Wednesday	3.00
42701	J Magilton	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
42502	M Pembridge	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
42504	G Hyde	Sheffield Wednesday	1.00
42505	G Whittingham	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50
42702	R Slater	Southampton	0.75
42704	K Richardson	Southampton	0.50
42705	C Palmer	Southampton	2.00
42706	M Oakley	Southampton	1.50
42601	A Sekerlioglu	St Johnstone	0.75
42801	A Sinton	Tottenham Hotspur	3.00
42802	D Anderton	Tottenham Hotspur	3.00
42803	R Fox	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
42804	D Howells	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
42805	D Ginola	Tottenham Hotspur	3.00
42901	E Berkovic	West Ham United	2.50
42902	S Lomas	West Ham United	2.50
42903	J Moncur	West Ham United	2.00
43001	R Earle	Wimbledon	4.00
43002	N Ardley	Wimbledon	2.00
43003	V Jones	Wimbledon	2.00
42904	M Hughes	Wimbledon	2.00
43004	C Hughes	Wimbledon	1.50

STRIKERS

Code	Name	Team	Price £m
50101	B Dodds	Aberdeen	4.00
50201	I Wright	Arsenal	7.50
50202	D Bergkamp	Arsenal	8.50
50301	D Yorke	Aston Villa	6.00
50302	S Collymore	Aston Villa	5.00
50303	S Milosevic	Aston Villa	3.00
50401	G Hristov	Barnsley	1.50
50402	J Hendrie	Barnsley	1.50
51102	A Ward	Barnsley	2.00
50403	C Marcelle	Barnsley	1.00
50501	K Gallacher	Blackburn Rovers	5.50
50502	M Dahlin	Blackburn Rovers	4.00
50503	C Sutton	Blackburn Rovers	6.00
50602	N Blake	Bolton Wanderers	3.50
50603	P Beardsley	Bolton Wanderers	2.00
53003	D Holdsworth	Bolton Wanderers	3.00
51601	D Jackson	Celtic	4.00
50703	T Johnson	Celtic	2.50
50704	S Donnelly	Celtic	4.50
50705	H Larsson	Celtic	4.50
50801	G Zola	Chelsea	7.00
50802	M Hughes	Chelsea	5.00
50901	D Dublin	Coventry City	5.00
50902	D Huckerby	Coventry City	2.50
50903	N Whelan	Coventry City	2.00
51001	N Shipperley	Crystal Palace	1.50
51003	B Dyer	Crystal Palace	3.00
51004	M Padovano	Crystal Palace	2.50
51101	D Sturridge	Derby County	4.00
51103	F Baiano	Derby County	4.50
51104	D Burton	Derby County	1.50
51105	P Wanchope	Derby County	3.50
51201	A McLaren	Dundee United	3.00
51202	K Olofsson	Dundee United	4.00
51301	G Britton	Dunfermline	2.00
51401	D Ferguson	Everton	4.00
51402	N Barmby	Everton	3.00
51404	D Cadamarteri	Everton	2.50
51501	J Robertson	Hearts	3.50
51502	J Hamilton	Hearts	3.00
51602	S Crawford	Hibernian	3.00
51701	P Wright	Kilmarnock	5.00
51702	A Mitchell	Kilmarnock	2.50
51801	J Hasselbaink	Leeds United	3.00
51803	R Wallace	Leeds United	3.50
51804	H Kewell	Leeds United	2.00
51901	S Claridge	Leicester City	2.50
51902	E Heskey	Leicester City	4.50
51903	I Marshall	Leicester City	2.50
51904	G Fenton	Leicester City	2.00
52001	R Fowler	Liverpool	8.00
52002	P Berger	Liverpool	3.00
52003	K Riedle	Liverpool	4.50
52004	M Owen	Liverpool	4.50
52101	O Solskjaer	Manchester United	7.50
52102	T Sheringham	Manchester United	7.00
52103	P Scholes	Manchester United	6.00
52201	O Coyle	Motherwell	3.00
52202	T Coyne	Motherwell	3.00
52301	A Shearer	Newcastle United	10.00
52303	F Asprilla	Newcastle United	6.00
52304	J Tomasson	Newcastle United	2.00
52401	M Negri	Rangers	8.50
52402	S Rozental	Rangers	3.50
52403	G Durie	Rangers	3.00
52501	A Booth	Sheffield Wednesday	3.00
50702	P Di Canio	Sheffield Wednesday	3.00
52503	R Humphreys	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00
52701	M Le Tissier	Southampton	7.00
52502	D Hirst	Southampton	2.50
52702	E Ostenstad	Southampton	4.00
52704	K Davies	Southampton	3.50
52601	G O'Boyle	St Johnstone	1.50
52602	R Grant	St Johnstone	1.00
52801	S Iversen	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50
52302	L Ferdinand	Tottenham Hotspur	7.50
52802	C Armstrong	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50
52803	J Dominguez	Tottenham Hotspur	3.00
52901	J Hartson	West Ham United	4.50
52902	P Kitson	West Ham United	3.00
52903	I Dowie	West Ham United	1.50
53001	M Gayle	Wimbledon	4.00
53002	E Ekoku	Wimbledon	4.00
53004	C Cort	Wimbledon	3.00

MANAGERS

Code	Name	Team	Price £m
60102	A Miller	Aberdeen	1.50
60201	A Wenger	Arsenal	5.00
60301	B Little	Aston Villa	2.50
60401	D Wilson	Barnsley	0.50
60501	R Hodgson	Blackburn Rovers	3.50
60601	C Todd	Bolton Wanderers	1.50
60701	W Jansen	Celtic	4.00
60801	R Gullit	Chelsea	3.50
60901	G Strachan	Coventry City	1.00
61001	S Coppell	Crystal Palace	0.75
61101	J Smith	Derby County	2.50
61201	T McLean	Dundee United	2.00
61301	B Paton	Dunfermline	1.00
61401	H Kendall	Everton	2.00
61501	J Jefferies	Hearts	3.50
61601	J Duffy	Hibernian	2.00
61701	B Williamson	Kilmarnock	1.00
61801	G Graham	Leeds United	3.00
61901	M O'Neill	Leicester City	2.50
62001	R Evans	Liverpool	3.00
62101	A Ferguson	Manchester United	5.00
62201	A McLeish	Motherwell	1.00
62301	K Dalglish	Newcastle United	4.00
62401	W Smith	Rangers	5.00
62502	R Atkinson	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50
62701	D Jones	Southampton	0.50
62601	P Sturrock	St Johnstone	0.50
62802	C Gross	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00
62901	H Redknapp	West Ham United	2.00
63001	J Kinnear	Wimbledon	2.00

SWIMMING

Hickman in need of a timely reminder

By Craig Lord

A DEBILITATING case of food poisoning, suffered just before the European championships in Spain last summer, has left James Hickman, of Stockport, with plenty on his plate at the British championships in Sheffield over the next four days.

Hickman, 21, the world short-course champion over 200 metres butterfly, had to withdraw from the European competition in Seville because of a stomach upset and has yet to qualify for the world long-course championships, in Perth, Australia, from January 8-18.

Sheffield will provide two more encounters with Stephen Parry, of Liverpool, who won the bronze medal in the 200 metres butterfly in Seville, and qualified for Perth, while a sickly Hickman watched from the side. The clock, though, will be the only measure of how well the Stockport swimmer has handled a summer of disappointment and his subsequent decision to split from his coach, Dave Calleja.

Victory is not enough. Hickman's best times of the season are 54.46sec over 100 metres and 1min 59.59sec over 200 metres, both inside the times he needs. However, those efforts came before July, and only times set since then count.

Hickman announced on Tuesday that the "differences and disputes" between himself and Calleja had reached "a point at which a return is very unlikely." A row at a training camp in the United States in October led to Hickman returning early to Britain, and Calleja has been absent from work through illness since then.

Calleja has ruled himself out from being a coach at the world championships, which will mean that Graeme Smith, the Olympic bronze medal-winner in the 1,500 metres freestyle last year, will compete in a senior international for the first time without his coach present.

While Calleja is absent from work, his assistant, Sean Kelly, is coaching Hickman and Smith.

Hickman said: "I've done a solid block of work just lately and I'm confident I'll be in Perth. Its been a difficult time for me and I'm just trying to focus on the races ahead and block out the diversions around that."

Although 22 British swimmers have already booked their tickets to Australia, there are 29 chances for others to qualify in Sheffield, a statistic that provides Deryk Snelling, the national performance director, with plenty of room for improving overall standards. While there are world-class performers, such as Smith, Paul Palmer and Mark Foster on the team, Britain is yet to find swimmers fast enough to meet qualification standards for Perth in ten out of the 26 individual events for men and women. The tough targets were set by British officials keen to raise standards.

Among those close to debut senior selection is Melanie Marshall, 15, one of the most promising talents in Britain. Perhaps the unluckiest competitor of last summer, Marshall, of Boston, South Lincolnshire, was among the top four over 100 metres freestyle, but was omitted from the relay for Seville. She subsequently anchored the national junior 4 x 100 metres freetyle team to a surprise victory over Germany at the European junior championships.

Hickman: pressure

Sheikh Mohammed, right, proudly displays his dual classic winner, Balanchine, at his Al Quoz stables in Dubai. Photograph: Edward Whittaker

Sport of kings at risk from ire of a Sheikh

Julian Muscat on the likely consequences of the Maktoums' withdrawal from British racing

The casual observer of horseracing in Britain is aware of one detail above all others: that owning a racehorse involves huge cost. A racehorse is a symbol of status. Those who own more than others are simply richer, and Sheikh Mohammed, whose investment in British racing is unparalleled in Turf history, is the richest sugar-daddy of them all.

The Crown Prince of Dubai and his brothers are possessed of immeasurable wealth, yet their involvement in racing could not be farther removed from the common perception. Their love of the game runs deep: racing is an addiction only properly understood by the afflicted.

It is because their involvement over 20 years has been anything but superficial that their influence has become all-embracing. In the short term, their withdrawal would result in thousands of lost jobs, with plummeting values in bloodstock. In the longer term, it would consign British racing, the envy of the world, to the lower divisions. Indeed, it is thanks to the Maktoum family that the quality of British racing has defied the lamentable rewards on offer, itself the cause of Sheikh Mohammed's unrest.

If anything, their patronage has served to camouflage British racing's many ills. The tortuous prize-money debate has long blighted racehorse ownership. The complaint is repeatedly voiced by thousands of "small" owners who drop away every year. Who can really believe that British racing is seriously underfunded when young and untried horses are selling for millions at auction? Who really cares? In this respect, the sport is like the proverbial dumb blonde: the problem is not attracting interest but sustaining it beyond introductions.

This fault within the sport may have seismic ramifications. A withdrawal by the Maktoums — assuming that they dispersed their stock — would flood the market with bloodlines rendered precious in today's environment only by their scarcity. The value of every single thoroughbred would crash overnight. Hundreds of regal broodmares would be sold abroad, their progeny destined to race on foreign fields, and the painstaking repatriation of stallion blood lost to the United States, initiated by Robert Sangster in the 1970s and accelerated by the Maktoums, would dissolve once again.

As for yearling prices, the Maktoums' influence has long determined whether "select" auctions succeed or fail. During the Gulf War, their non-appearance at Tattersalls left domestic breeders with their heads in a financial noose. Gone will be the pleasure of watching the best North American-bred yearlings that the Maktoums annually import; gone will be the knowledge that the toughest championship races are staged in Britain.

Of course, the Maktoums' overwhelming presence has incubated its own problems. From a vastly different cultural background, they engender no affinity among the public. They constitute the ruling family of Dubai, uninhibited by financial constraints, initially unaccustomed to the rhythms of the sport. No effort was made by British racing officials to embrace them on their arrival. They have been misunderstood for too long to redress this unfortunate stand-off.

In terms of their public face, the Maktoums have been badly advised. Sheikh Mohammed's early ventures saw him purchase virtually any good racehorse. What the family saw as their right amounted to unpalatable excess in establishment eyes. Only in the past four years has Sheikh Mohammed emerged from his bodyguards to reveal himself a true lover of the thoroughbred.

It is a facet of his character that should have been conveyed earlier. Even now, as he authorises the words that shake the foundations of a multibillion-pound industry, he does so through an aide. How much better to have spoken them himself, to have denounced bookmakers personally, to have raised a smile when giving an assurance that he is not quite down to his last three camels.

At some stage, almost everyone involved on a small scale has voiced criticisms of the Maktoums' dominance. These sentiments are largely born of frustration and immediately seized upon by a hungry media. Very few would be pleased to see the Maktoums depart. Indeed, how much worse it would be if runners from Sheikh Mohammed's Godolphin stable, based in the deserts of Dubai, jetted in to Britain to plunder the championship races.

Godolphin, now established for five years, marked the first tangible sign that Sheikh Mohammed wanted a hands-on influence over his horses. He watches more morning workouts than he misses. All horse-lovers can empathise with that, but Godolphin's successful exploits have proved that the Maktoums no longer need to patronise British racing for their enjoyment.

Nor should it be underestimated how the Maktoums' presence has underpinned the rich historical fabric of British racing. The knowledge that British racing is best acts as a magnet to others. André Fabre and Criquette Head, the leading trainers in France, regularly dispatch horses to contest the British classics. Without the Maktoums' investment, prestigious British victories on foreign pastures would seriously diminish. Such conquests raise the value of horses exported from Britain — to the benefit of all owners.

British racing would survive a withdrawal, just as it has survived the loss of other magnates in the past. When assessing their contribution, the question is whether one prefers a more equitable distribution of top prizes at huge cost to quality. Processions of joyous owners celebrating mediocrity can be seen any day — champions such as Singspiel and Lammtarra, Nashwan and Oh So Sharp, Dayjur and others too numerous to mention, are a much rarer breed.

FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Norwich v Chelsea (7.30)

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: *Premier division:* Aston Villa v Liverpool (7.0), Blackburn v Manchester Utd (7.0) Leeds v Tranmere (at Halifax Town FC, 7.0)

FA UMBRO TROPHY: Third qualifying round: Great Harwood v Witton (7.45)

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Classic Cola National Cup: Semi-final, first leg: London Towers v Leicester Riders (8.0)

ICE HOCKEY: *Express Cup:* Newcastle Cobras v Cardiff Devils (7.0)

SWIMMING: ASA national winter championships (at Ponds Forge, Sheffield)

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SNOOKER

Parrott's passport to victory

From Phil Yates in Bingen

JOHN PARROTT enhanced his reputation as one of the game's most successful overseas campaigners by beating Stephen Lee 5-3 for a place in the quarter-finals of the German Open at the Atlantis Rhein Hotel here yesterday.

The 1991 world and United Kingdom champion, a trophy winner in Malta, Belgium, France, China, Monaco, Thailand and Dubai, is eager to end the year with his first title since the European Open of March 1996.

He now meets either Stephen Hendry, the world No 1, or Jimmy White, with confidence boosted by a solid performance that suggested he is capable of pocketing the £50,000 first prize and silencing those who believe that television commitments are affecting his form. Parrott, who insists that is not the case, recovered from the loss of the opening frame with runs of 105, 37, 53 and 38 in moving 3-1 ahead, but Lee, who has climbed from sixteenth to thirteenth in the Embassy world rankings this season, produced a counter-attack.

Lee compiled a 72 break to win the fifth frame in a single scoring visit, drew level with a yellow-to-pink clearance and had established a 37-0 advantage in the seventh when he overcut a tricky black. Given his lack of table-time, Parrott did well to respond with a 73 clearance and he won the eighth frame, a tactical affair of 54 minutes, on the pink.

"I do really well when my passport comes out of the drawer and I think it's because there's a lack of distractions," Parrott said. "There's nothing to do except practise . . . you can't nip off and try to back a winner at Fontwell."

Anthony Hamilton, the world No 14, reached the quarter-finals of a world ranking event for the first time in his six years as a professional, after ten unsuccessful appearances in the last 16, beating Jason Ferguson 5-2.

Hamilton, denied a place in the last eight at the recent UK championship when he was edged 9-8 by Hendry after leading 8-5, won the first four frames before wobbling again. "I am so relieved," Hamilton, who now meets John Higgins, said. "What happened against Stephen was in my head. I couldn't stop thinking about it and that created a lot of pressure."

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

This hand illustrates a misuse of splinters.

Dealer South **Love all** **Rubber bridge**

North:
♠ A K Q 6 4
♥ K J 6 4
♦ 5
♣ 8 6 3

West:
♠ 9 8 7
♥ Q 9
♦ K 10 9 7 4
♣ K 9 2

East:
♠ J 10 3
♥ 5 2
♦ A 8 2
♣ J 10 7 5 4

South:
♠ 5 2
♥ A 10 8 7 3
♦ Q J 6 3
♣ A Q

S	W	N	E
1 H	Pass	4 D	Pass
4 H	Pass	4 S	Pass
5 C	Pass	6 H	Pass
Pass	Double	All Pass	

Contract: Six Hearts Doubled, by South **Lead: Eight of spades**

North was TGR's Serb, Nikita Cahursky — we have a cosmopolitan membership. When he first heard about splinter bids, a couple of years ago, he thought they were a type of Balkan political manoeuvre, but now he misuses them at the bridge table like the rest of us.

On this hand, North's Four Diamonds was a splinter, showing a singleton diamond and good trump support. It would have been better to bid Two Spades on the first round — you should not make a splinter bid if you have a strong side-suit. As it went, North was conscious that he might have understated his playing strength; so he propelled his side into a contract that was against the odds — it needed hearts to behave as well as something else favourable.

The intrepid proprietor was West. His double looks crazy, but worked well. Declarer won the spade in dummy and played a diamond. Sitting East, I won and switched to a club. Declarer took the ace and now had to decide how to play the hearts. After a heart to the king, he eventually decided to finesse, and so the contract went two off.

He probably thought "Would anyone be idiotic enough to double with Q x of trumps?" What he should have thought was "Is a double on Q x of trumps more or less likely than a double on a singleton trump?"

Against this particular opponent, that would have indicated the winning line.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

SHAKESPEARIANS

PAULINA
a. A merry wife
b. A faithful courtier
c. A punk

TRINCULO
a. A jester
b. A fairy
c. An Athenian wit

BELARIUS
a. A loyal Brit
b. The god of war
c. A Volscian general

FLORIZEL
a. A shepherd
b. A handsome prince
c. A rude companion

Answers on page 50

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene
Chess Correspondent

Fide championship

In the first round of the Fide (World Chess Federation) championship in Groningen, Holland, Peter Wells, of England, got off to a poor start, losing the first game (of two) in his match against Boris Alterman, of Israel. If he is to progress further in this knockout event, he must now level the scores by winning the second game and thus forcing a speed play-off. Other players similarly in danger of a quick elimination include Peter Leko, 18, of Hungary, who lost his first game against Roman Slobodjan, of Germany, and the only ex-world champion in the field, Vassily Smyslov, 76, who went down to Alexander Morozevich, of Russia.

In the following game, White's central breakthrough establishes a powerful passed pawn on b7 which enables him to manoeuvre into a winning endgame.

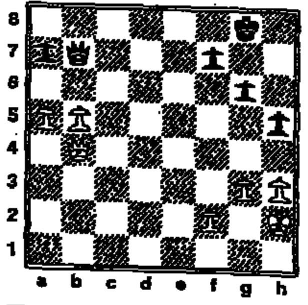
White: Boris Alterman
Black: Peter Wells
Groningen, December 1997

Nimzo-Indian Defence

1	d4	Nf6
2	c4	e6
3	Nc3	Bb4
4	e3	0-0
5	Bd3	d5
6	Nge2	dxc4
7	Bxc4	e5
8	0-0	exd4
9	exd4	Nc6
10	h3	Bf5
11	a3	Bd6
12	Bg5	h6
13	Bh4	Be7
14	Re1	Ne4
15	Bxe7	Nxe7
16	Nf4	Nf6
17	Nh5	Nxh5
18	Qxh5	Bg6
19	Qg4	Kh8
20	Rad1	c6
21	Qh4	Ng8
22	Qf4	Nf6
23	d5	Bh5
24	dxc6	Bxd1
25	cxb7	Rb8
26	Rxd1	Qe7
27	Be6	Qe6
28	Rd6	Qe1+
29	Kh2	Qe7
30	Nd5	Nxd5
31	Rxd5	Qe6
32	Rd6	Qe7
33	b4	Kg8
34	Rc6	Rxb7
35	Bxb7	Qxb7
36	Rc5	Rc8
37	Rxc8+	Qxc8
38	a4	Qa6
39	b5	Qb6
40	Qe3	Qc7+
41	g3	h5
42	Qe8+	Kh7
43	Qe4+	g6
44	Qf4	Qb7
45	a5	Kg8
46	Qb4	

Black resigns

Diagram of final position



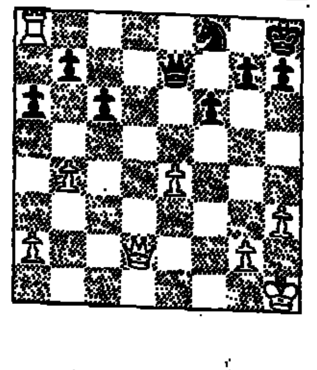
☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Cacho — Buxade, Spain 1997. White is ahead on material. However, the black position is solid and a long struggle appears in prospect. In fact, White swiftly concluded matters. How?

Solution on page 50



LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES 0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

ALLEN EDWARD BATES
DECEASED.
Late of 50/51 Berwick Street, W1 (formerly of 2 Stanhope Place W2). Would anyone having any information with regards to a will, please contact his sister, Marion Cotter, 39 Foley Street, London W1P 8JL on 0171 436 6666 or 01634 222294.

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
No 006570 of 1997
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF STERLING PUBLICATIONS LIMITED
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) dated 3 December 1997 confirming the reduction of the capital of the above-named Company from £10,000,303 to £1,551,935 and the Minute approved by the Court showing with respect to the capital of the Company as altered the several particulars required by the above-mentioned Act were registered by the Registrar of Companies on 9 December 1997.
DATED this 9 day of December 1997
TAYLOR JOHNSON GARRETT
Carmelite, 50 Victoria Embankment, Blackfriars, London EC4Y 0DX
Ref: SKS
Tel: 0171 353 1234
Solicitors for the above named Company

LEGAL NOTICES

WALLBROOK LTD
(In Members Voluntary Liquidation)
I, PETER WILLIAM NICOLL, Chartered Accountant, Sherwood House, 7 Glasgow Road, Paisley PA1 3QS HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that on 28th November 1997 I was appointed Liquidator of the above named Company by resolution of a meeting of the Company.
P W Nicoll
Liquidator
This is a formal Notice as all creditors have or will be paid in full.
Dallas Nicoll & Co
Sherwood House
7 Glasgow Road
PAISLEY PA1 3QS
5th December 1997

The Insolvency Act 1986
GPI PLC
(IN LIQUIDATION)
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
NO 2763 OF 1997
GPI plc, trading as Government Purchasing Index, GPI House, 142-144 Cromwell Road, LONDON SW7 4EF
In accordance with Rule 4.106 of the Insolvency Act 1986, I, Peter John Forsey of Morison Stoneham, Moriston House, 75 Springfield Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6JB, hereby give notice that I was appointed as Liquidator of the above named company on 17 September 1997. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 139 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that it is not my intention to call a meeting of creditors in order to establish a committee of creditors. However I will summon a meeting if I am requested, in accordance with the Rules to do so by one-tenth, in value, of the company's creditors.
Dated 24 November 1997
Peter John Forsey, Liquidator.

The Insolvency Act 1986
GLYCOSPORT SOFT DRINKS LIMITED
(In Liquidation)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I, Stephen Lord of Poppleton & Appleby, 32 High Street, Manchester, M4 1QD was appointed Liquidator of the above named Company by the Members and Creditors on 2nd December 1997.
Dated 2nd December 1997
STEPHEN LORD, Liquidator

COMPANY NUMBER 3199597
AUGUST INVESTMENTS LIMITED
(IN MEMBERS VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION)
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
On 4 August 1997 the above named company was placed in Members' Voluntary Liquidation and Anthony Victor Lomas of Price Waterhouse was appointed Liquidator by the shareholders. The Liquidator gives notice under the provisions of Rule 4.182A of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that the creditors of the company must send details, in writing, of any claim against the company to the Liquidator at No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9QL by 12 January 1998 which is the last day for proving claims. The Liquidator also gives notice that he will then make a final distribution to creditors and that a creditor who does not make a claim by the date mentioned will not be included in the distribution.
All known creditors have been or will be paid in full.
Date 8 December 1997
AV Lomas, Liquidator.

F E D LIMITED
(In Members Voluntary Liquidation)
The Insolvency Act 1986
In accordance with Rule 4.106 of the Insolvency Rules 1986, notice is hereby given that I, K D Goodman, FCA a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner of Messrs. Leonard Curtis & Co, PO Box 553, 30 Eastbourne Terrace, London W2 6LF, was appointed Liquidator of the above Company by the members on 21st November 1997.

NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that the Creditors of the above named company, which is being voluntarily wound up, are required, on or before the 31st December 1997 to send in their full forenames and surnames, their addresses and descriptions, full particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their Solicitors (if any) to the above, K D Goodman, FCA the Liquidator of the said company, and, if so required by notice in writing from the said Liquidator, are personally or by their solicitors to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice, or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved.

The Company is known to be able to pay all of its creditors in full.

Dated this 3rd December 1997
K D Goodman GFCA, Liquidator

Levinson Books Limited
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Leonard Curtis & Co, situated at 30 Eastbourne Terrace, (2nd Floor), London W2 6LF, on 19th December 1997 at 12.00 for the purposes provided in Section 98 et seq. It is not intended to propose any resolutions at the meeting concerning Liquidators remuneration, however the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. A list of names and addresses of the above company's creditors can be inspected at the offices of Leonard Curtis & Co, PO Box 553, 30 Eastbourne Terrace, (2nd Floor), London W2 6LF, between the hours of 10.00am to 4.00pm on the two business days preceding the Meeting of Creditors.
DATED THIS 3rd December 1997
J L Levinson - Director

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TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION
PLEASE TELEPHONE
0171 680 6878
FAX: 0171 481 9313
Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

هكذا من الإصل

RACING: BHB URGED TO SUBMIT PERSUASIVE ARGUMENT TO SECURE CUT IN BETTING DUTY

Treasury refutes overtaxation claim

By Richard Evans
Racing Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT reacted last night to the Maktoums' threat to withdraw from British racing by insisting that the level of taxation is not the major problem facing the sport. "We do not see taxation as the major issue here and we do not believe the industry is overtaxed," a Treasury spokeswoman said.

In his Gimcrack speech, Sheikh Mohammed insisted the Government extracted from racing — via betting duty — more money than was justifiable or sustainable. He said the Government had to be persuaded to reduce the present betting duty rate of 6.75 per cent.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: Gold Pigeon
(1.55 Market Rasen)

Gold Pigeon showed enough on her seasonal reappearance at Catterick recently to suggest she should be winning soon. The consistent stayer looks to have an ideal opportunity over this extended 3½ miles.

Next Best: Wade Road
(2.55 Market Rasen)

If the Treasury maintains its stance the departure of the Maktoums appears inevitable, with the loss of hundreds of jobs. However, the Treasury official did offer a glimmer of hope. "This is a listening Government," she said.

"In his pre-Budget report last week the Chancellor asked for a national debate on various fiscal issues, one of which is taxation. If the horse racing fraternity feels that there are any specific problems with regard to taxation we would be more than happy to hear those concerns."

Accordingly, the British Horseracing Board (BHB) is in the process of drawing up its pre-Budget submission in which it will urge Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to cut betting duty and transfer the money to racing's coffers via the levy. Instead of taking 6.75 pence out of the nine pence deducted from every £1 bet, the BHB will urge the Government to take five pence — with the 1.75 pence difference going to the levy. That would be worth an extra £77 million a year to racing.

John Greenway, the outgoing chairman of the all-party parliamentary racing committee, stressed: "There is a serious imbalance in the money that goes to the Treasury and cash that goes to racing. The Treasury has got to understand that it has a vested interest in maintaining the quality of the racing product and that puts real pressure on the quality of the BHB submission and the level of support that submission gets in parliament."

Lord Wakeham, chairman of the BHB, said yesterday that racing, the Government and the betting industry "ignore at their collective peril" Sheikh Mohammed's forthright views, given the level of investment by the Maktoums during the past 20 years.

He endorsed Sheikh Mohammed's belief that the Government extracted from racing, via betting duty, more money than was justifiable or sustainable in the long term.

Tristram Ricketts, chief executive of the BHB, said after racing's budget submission was sent to the Treasury that they would seek a meeting with the Chancellor "to ram home the message".

The hardest task the industry faces is persuading the Government how racing is suffering financially when bloodstock prices are rocketing and individuals are prepared to spend 2.5 million guineas on a foal. The best hope may be for the BHB to widen the debate beyond the issue of how much Government receives from betting duty — and to examine the big bookmakers' part in the financial equation.

Interestingly, the Treasury spokeswoman was at pains to point out last night that Sheikh Mohammed had raised other issues apart from how much the Government received — notably the bookmakers' record profits.

The best hope for racing will be if Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, takes up the cudgels. He possesses a wide knowledge of racing and would recognise some of the twaddle which was spouted yesterday by various bookmaking representatives — notably David Hood of William Hill. "We already contribute about 33 per cent of our profits from racing to the levy, equivalent to about £17 million a year," he said, conveniently forgetting that the punter — not William Hill — pays the levy.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE

Singspiel, whose big-race victories included the Juddmonte International at York, was the standard bearer for Sheikh Mohammed this year

Arab departure would have seismic impact

By Chris McGrath

RACING is not immune to petty jealousies, and there will doubtless be those whose fancy is now tickled by the sudden anguish of rivals privileged, over the past 20 years, to have enjoyed the patronage of the Maktoum brothers. If the sheikhs finally despair of their Sisyphean financial labour, however, the shock will be absorbed down to the very grass roots of the British Turf.

The Maktoums, as owners of much the biggest stake in the sport, provide its economic centre of gravity. While Newmarket would not quite become a ghost town overnight, those working for the family yesterday warned that its departure would have a seismic impact on one of Britain's ten biggest industries.

Some stables, such as those of John Gosden and Ed Dunlop, are virtually private operations. More typical is the medium-sized yard of David Morley, whose string of around 45 horses last season included 23 owned by Sheikh Hamdan. "If the Maktoums were to leave, it would have desperate consequences not just for Newmarket, but also for places like Lambourn and Arundel," Morley said.

"They have got several hundred horses in training, and then there are all the people working on their studs. It would have a huge impact: it would be a disaster — but I couldn't blame them in the slightest. In fact I'm amazed, given the pathetic prize-money in this country, that they have been so patient for so long.

"They have done the most enormous amount of good for our racing. It is the Maktoums who have kept the standard so high. Think of all the top-class horses the public has enjoyed, and the employment they've created. I just hope that people will sit up and pay attention to what they've said.

"If they do go, the British Horseracing Board would have nobody to blame but themselves. They keep blaming the Government, but nobody else running a business expects to be subsidised. The BHB has been complacent and apathetic."

Other members of the Maktoum camp were less forthright, but equally anxious to see an energetic response to Sheikh Mohammed's warnings. Some were especially chilled by the passage in his speech that lamented how their children could not be expected — as had been envisaged for so long — to follow in their fathers' footsteps.

"They find the derisory levels of prize-money extraordinary," one of the senior members of the Maktoum team observed. "When 25 horses, costing a fortune, compete for six grand in a Newmarket maiden, it becomes something of a theatre of the absurd. They are acutely aware of that."

He added that these pressures, together with the need to rationalise the Maktoum empire after the unrestrained boom years of its foundation, have enhanced the logic of Sheikh Mohammed's Godolphin revolution.

The Dubai enterprise appealed equally to the Sheikh's pride in his own cultural heritage, and to his personal dynamism — which, as has now become obvious, is so frustrated by a lack of corresponding charisma in those running the British sport.

TAUNTON

THUNDERER

1.00 Simply
1.30 Grey Shot
2.05 Glendoe
2.35 Torch Vert
3.05 Steeple Jack
3.35 KING OF THE DAWN (nap)

Timekeeper's top rating: 1.00 THE MINDER.

GOING. GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

1.00 POST BAG SELLING HURDLE
(£1,889: 2m 3f 110yd) (16 runners)

101 -1533-P FRIENDLY HOUSE 23 (BF,S) (Mrs S Buckley) M Pipe 8-11-12 G Supple (5) 89
102 0-064P5 ROSIE-B 14 (C,G) (Mrs J Waring) L Waring 7-11-7 M Griffiths (7) 99
103 1324-2P VA UTU 14 (B,BF,C,F,G) (A South) M Pipe 9-11-5 A P McCoy 101
104 01-F403 BRIGHT ECLIPSE 56 (F) (Mrs G Goddard) R Frost 4-10-12 J Frost 90
105 /6434-0 JAY EM ESS 183 (M Anderson) A Hobbs 8-10-12 G Shenkin (7) 81
106 P32R-RP LOFTY DEED 7 (S) (Mrs C Hicks) Mrs C Hicks 7-10-12 R Bellamy –
107 ON THE CARDS (West Dorset Racing) R Buckler 4-10-12 S McNeill –
108 00/42-4 PALACE PARADE 27 (Bideford Tool Ltd) A Hobbs 7-10-12 A Thornton 75
109 FP2- PLUVIUS 242P (W Dudley) C Hamsley 5-10-12 K Hartnett (7) –
110 5P40-3 ROLL AGAIN 15 (A Solomon) M Salaman 6-10-12 C Webb (5) 80
111 /2233P- SIMPLY 266 (F,G,S) (P Gibbons) M Madgwick 8-10-12 B Fenton 110
112 0FF-4P STONEHENGE SAM 15 (Stonehenge Racing) J Mullins 5-10-12 C Llewellyn 90
113 2-5252 THE MINDER 14 (B,CD,S) (G Edwards) G Edwards 10-10-12 D Salter (5) [illegible]
114 36606P COOCHIE 7 (B,C,F) (S McCausland) R Baker 8-10-7 V Slattery 82
115 26P40-0 LOVELARK 24 (H Babbey) R Brotherton 8-10-7 L Harvey 76
116 060-000 SPLASH OF BLAKENEY 15 (G Fox) S Knight 6-10-7 J Culloty 100

BETTING: 3-1 The Minder, 100-30 Va Utu, 13-2 Bright Eclipse, 8-1 Friendly House, Rosie-B, 12-1 others.

1996: HARRY 6-11-12 D J Burchell (evens fav) D Burchell 9 ran

FORM FOCUS Friendly House pulled up in novice handicap chase at Newton Abbot (2m 5f 110yd, soft); previously 8l 3rd of 9 to Alice's Mirror in handicap hurdle at Newton Abbot (2m 1f, heavy). Va Utu pulled up in selling handicap hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, good); previously 1¾l 2nd of 6 to Handson in handicap hurdle at Exeter (2m 3f, good to soft). Bright Eclipse 3¼l 3rd of 11 to Northern Drums in selling handicap hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good to firm) with Coochie (10lb better off) 24l 9th. Jay Em Ess 30l 7th of 16 to Edward Seymour in selling handicap hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m 4f 110yd, good to firm). Roll Again 22l 3rd of 12 to Moonraker's Mirage in selling hurdle at Chepstow (2m 4f 110yd, soft) with Stonehenge Sam (levels) pulled up. Simply pulled up in handicap chase at Plumpton (2m 5f, good to firm) previously 18l 3rd of 4 to Wassl Street in handicap hurdle at Towcester (2m, soft). The Minder 3l 2nd of 8 to Frontier Flight in handicap hurdle at Taunton (2m 3f 110yd, good) with Rosie-B (10lb worse off) 12l 5th. Lovelark 64l 7th of 11 to Native Shore in mares handicap hurdle at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, good to soft). Splash Of Blakeney 98l 9th of 16 to Strong Tel in novice hurdle at Chepstow (2m 4f 110yd, soft)

VA UTU ran badly last time but is the pick on his earlier efforts

1.30 SOMERSET COUNTY GAZETTE NOVICES HURDLE
(£4,039: 2m 1f) (14 runners)

201 01 ATLANTIC MIST 14 (CD,G) (Wardour Partnership) B Millman 4-11-4 D Salter (5) 99
202 506-001 MOONRAKER'S MIRAGE 15 (S) (White Horse Racing) D Elsworth 6-11-4 P Holley 102
203 00P-0P ACHILL PRINCE 6 (R Burrson) N Ayliffe 6-10-12 R Greene 50
204 0- ANOTHER BULA 551 (S Howe) H Howe 6-10-12 Mr S Durack (5) –
205 CHAHAYA TIMOR 852F (B) (P Haslam) R Simpson 5-10-12 A Thornton –
206 042- COUNTRY KRIS 243 (BF) (B Ryall) B Ryall 5-10-12 G Upton 89
207 GREY SHOT 46F (J Smith) I Balding 5-10-12 R Dunwoody –
208 0 HALMANERROR 21 (Caulkeads Racing) G McCourt 7-10-12 D Bridgwater –
209 OSCAR ROSE 132F (Mrs S Elphick) M Bolton 4-10-12 T Dascombe –
210 5F- RIVERS MAGIC 150F (M Pascall) J Bridger 4-10-12 W Marston –
211 50 SPORTING CHANCE 28 (H Channon) R Frost 5-10-12 J Frost 87
212 45 VILLAGE KING 14 (E Edwards-Heathcote) P Hobbs 4-10-12 C Llewellyn 80
213 2P-53 WELTON ARSENAL 14 (Business Forms Express) K Bishop 5-10-12 G Supple (5) 100
214 34-05 SALLY SCALLY 26 (E Retter) A Hobbs 5-10-7 J Culloty 125

BETTING: 4-11 Grey Shot, 7-1 Atlantic Mist, 12-1 Halmanerror, 14-1 Village King, 16-1 Moonraker's Mirage, Welton Arsenal, 20-1 Country Kris, 33-1 others

1996: YET AGAIN 4-11-6 D Bridgwater (11-4) Gay Kelleway 14 ran

FORM FOCUS Atlantic Mist beat Fresh Fruit Daily 1¾l in 13-runner novice hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good) with Village King (6lb better off) 9¼l 5th. Moonraker's Mirage beat Quiet Moments 22l in 12-runner selling hurdle at Chepstow (2m 4f 110yd, soft). Another Bula 79l 13th of 14 to Regal Gem in national hunt flat race at Worcester (2m, good). Country Kris 21l 2nd of 5 to Fiscot in national hunt flat race at Newton Abbot (2m 1f, firm). Grey Shot, top-class stayer on Flat, makes hurdling debut. Halmanerror 59l 11th of 20 to Ginger Fox in novice hurdle at Warwick (2m, good to soft). Welton Arsenal 16l 3rd of 10 to Gutteridge in novice handicap hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good). Sally Scally 27l 6th of 7 to Circus Star in novice hurdle grade 2 at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good)

GREY SHOT is a very smart stayer on the Flat and must not be opposed

2.05 PROPERTY GAZETTE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,331: 2m 3f) (14 runners)

301 12-251F MRS EM 3 (F,S) (G Marsh) P Nicholls 5-12-0 Mr J Tizzard (5) 120
302 6 2666- MANDALAY 600 (Acid Alliance) J Old 8-11-12 C Llewellyn –
303 556/-P1 GLENDOE 5 (S) (R Mackenzie) A Turnell 6-11-10 (7ex) S McNeill 117
304 1635-40 SMUGGLER'S POINT 22 (D,F,G) (Mrs V Heare) J Bridger 7-11-8 W Marston –
305 50330 SUPREME FLAME 14 (H Cole) H Cole 7-11-1 A Bates (5) 84
306 74-1074 DOLCE NOTTE 24 (D,F) (County Stores) M Pipe 7-10-10 A P McCoy –
307 51 06P4 HIGHTOWN CAVALIER 3 (D,S) (Miss R Dobson) R Hodges 6-10-8 T Dascombe 106
308 4520-24 WINNOW 7 ([illegible] Racing) Miss H Knight 7-10-8 J Culloty 107
309 4-21253 INDIAN TEMPLE 28 (CD,F) (D Clarke) K Bishop 6-10-4 G Supple (5) 115
310 2-P43-3 DURSACKS VIEW 15 (F Tucker) F Tucker 8-10-2 M Griffiths (7) 100
311 3-05534 MISS SOUTER 59 (F,S) (J Bath) H Howe 8-10-0 Mr S Durack (5) 69
312 P5212-P MIRAMARE 165 (BF,F) (D Smith) A Hobbs 7-10-0 B Fenton –
313 0F-4UPP MASTER BOMBER 15 (S) (C Fear) R Alner 6-10-0 P Holley 104
314 5P/PF0 SEA SCAMP 560 (G) (G Martin) D Mealy 9-10-0 V Slattery –

Long handicap: Miss Souter 9-[illegible], Miramare 9-12, Master Bomber 9-10, Sea Scamp 9-2.

BETTING: [illegible] Glendoe, 7-2 Mrs Em, 5-1 Dolce Notte, 11-2 Winnow, 10-1 Mandalay, Indian Temple, 14-1 Smuggler's Point, Miss Souter, [illegible] others

1996: FRONTIER FLIGHT 6-11-3 E Husband (16-1) Miss L Siddall 14 ran

FORM FOCUS Mrs Em fell in novice chase at Ludlow (2m, good); previously beat Carolines Legacy 1¼l in 5-runner mares novice chase at Wincanton (2m, good to soft). Mandalay 23l 6th of 9 to Tough Test in novice [illegible] (2m 6f, soft). Glendoe beat Hooded Hawk 13l in 9-runner novice handicap [illegible] (2m 3f, soft). Hightown Cavalier 43l 4th of 14 to Mr Strong Gale in novice [illegible] (2m 6f, good). Winnow 14l 4th of 15 to Oliver's Secret in maiden chase [illegible]. Indian Temple 5¾l 3rd of 11 to Eleus in novice handicap chase [illegible] with Hightown Cavalier (4lb better off) 15l 6th and Master Bomber (9lb [illegible]) at Taunton (2m [illegible], good). Dursacks View beaten a distance 3rd of 4 to Lake Kariba in novice chase at [illegible]. Miss Souter 17l 4th of 7 to Harlequin Walk in handicap hurdle at Chepstow (2m 110yd, [illegible]). Miramare previously 2l 2nd of 12 to Paulton in selling hurdle at [illegible] (2m [illegible] good)

[illegible] MRS EM should be given a chance to atone for her fall

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

103 (12) 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 9-10-0 B West (4) 88

Racecard number. Draw in brackets. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing; J if jumps, F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating.

2.35 MOTORING GAZETTE HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,880: 3m 110yd) (11 runners)

401 51P/F3P EVER SMILE 15 (D,F,S) (D L'Estrange) M Pipe 10-11-10 D Fehrmann 117
402 2-36253 PERCY BRAITHWAITE 20 (F) (Glass Pig) Miss P Whittle 5-11-3 Mr S Durack (5) 131
403 P-34025 JOVIAL MAN 15 (F,S) (Mrs B Marchant) R O'Sullivan 8-10-12 P Holley 124
404 04P-F11 TORCH VERT 16 (V,D,G,S) (P Green) M Pipe 5-10-10 A P McCoy 123
405 22V/P2- PHARSILK 255 (S) (Miss J Rumford) R Simpson 8-10-7 P McLoughlin –
406 33P-15P COPPER COIL 15 (D,G,S) (R Lloyd) R Buckler 7-10-5 S McNeill 121
407 002-311 WELSH SILK 13 (G,S) (Mrs D Blackshaw) D Gandolfo 5-10-4 R Dunwoody 120
408 32313-4 DEFENDTHEREALM 23 (S) (G Standing) R Frost 6-10-0 J Frost 100
409 5013-22 COUNTRY TARQUIN 8 (S) (Miss C James) R Hodges 5-10-0 T Dascombe [illegible]
410 -P21P2P ST MELLION LEISURE 5 (F) (St Mellion Estates Ltd) N Hawke 5-10-0 R Greene 117
411 233-F28 RUM CUSTOMER 21 (Mrs D Nicholson) C Barwell 6-10-0 B Fenton 91

Long handicap: Country Tarquin 9-12, St Mellion Leisure 9-12, Rum Customer 9-8.

BETTING: 2-1 Torch Vert, 7-2 Welsh Silk, 8-1 Percy Braithwaite, Jovial Man, Country Tarquin, 10-1 Ever Smile, 12-1 Defendtherealm, 14-1 others.

1996: ROSIE-B 6-10-0 Mr R Thornton (7-4 fav) N Babbage 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Ever Smile pulled up in handicap hurdle at Chepstow (3m, soft); previously 26l 3rd of 4 to Derring Bridge in handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (3m, good). Percy Braithwaite beaten a distance last of 3 to Whip Hand in hurdle at Aintree (2m 110yd, good). Jovial Man 11l 5th of 14 to Ivor's Flutter in handicap hurdle at Windsor (2m 6f 110yd, good) with Copper Coil (1lb better off) pulled up. Torch Vert beat Danger Flynn neck in 14-runner novice hurdle at Worcester (3m, soft). Pharsilk 5l 2nd of 5 to James The First in handicap chase at Chepstow (2m 3f 110yd, good). Welsh Silk beat Stormy Session neck in 10-runner novice handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 5f, soft). Defendtherealm beaten a distance 4th of 8 to Deano's Beeno in handicap hurdle at Newton Abbot (2m 6f, soft). Country Tarquin ¾l 2nd of 10 to None Stirred in handicap hurdle at Fontwell (2m 6f 110yd, soft). St Mellion Leisure pulled up in handicap hurdle at Towcester (3m, soft), previously 5l 2nd of 10 to Decyborg in novice hurdle at Taunton (3m 110yd, good). Rum Customer 58l 6th of 13 to Eishken in novice hurdle at Wincanton (2m 6f, good to soft)

WELSH SILK is improving and might be a bit of value against Torch Vert

3.05 GAZETTE SPORT HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,146: 3m) (8 runners)

501 111211U GALATASORI JANE 20 (D,F,S) (B Bloomam) P Nicholls 7-12-0 Mr J Tizzard (5) 102
502 23P-422 MAMMY'S CHOICE 14 (BF,D,S) (D Young) R Alner 7-11-8 A Thornton 122
503 3U1-364 AMBER SPARK 8 (B,S) (R Brinkworth) D Gandolfo 8-11-4 R Dunwoody 119
504 211/P-P MAREMMA GALE 16 (B,F,G) (R Scorgie) N Mitchell 9-11-2 Sophie Mitchell (5) –
505 U/04P-3 SPACE CAPPA 14 (CD,G,S) Miss V Stephens 9-11-1 Miss V Stephens 123
506 3/PP13- SILVERINO 257 (D,G,S) (S Burfield) P Rodford 11-11-0 S Burrough 103
507 441124U INDIAN RUN 6 (B,S) (P Slade) R Hodges 8-10-12 T Dascombe 120
508 4555-2F STEEPLE JACK 6 (B,CD,S) (K Bishop) K Bishop 10-10-4 R Greene 117

BETTING: 5-2 Mammy's Choice, 3-1 Galatasori Jane, 5-1 Space Cappa, 7-1 Amber Spark, Steeple Jack, 9-1 Silverino, 10-1 Indian Run, 33-1 Maremma Gale

1996: CALL ME RIVER 8-10-0 I Lawrence (15-8 fav) P Hedger 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Galatasori Jane unseated rider in novice handicap chase at Ascot (3m 110yd, good), previously beat Dr Leunt 30l in 3-runner novice chase at Newton Abbot (3m 2f 110yd, good to firm). Mammy's Choice ¾l 2nd of 8 to Equity Player in handicap chase at Taunton (3m, good) with Space Cappa (1lb better off) ¾l 3rd. Amber Spark 13l 4th of 6 to Alter The Fox in handicap chase at Southwell (2m 4f 110yd, good). Silverino beaten a distance 3rd of 4 to Fortunes Course in handicap chase at Newton Abbot (3m 2f 110yd, good to firm). Indian Run unseated rider in selling handicap chase at Exeter (2m 2f, soft); previously beaten a distance 4th of 5 to Karar in handicap chase at Plumpton (2m 5f, soft). Steeple Jack fell in handicap chase at Exeter (2m 7f 110yd, soft), previously 2½l 2nd of 10 to Dream Leader in handicap chase at Taunton (3m, good).

MAMMY'S CHOICE relishes a soft surface and should run a sound race

3.35 TAUNTON TOPICS HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,794: 2m 1f) (7 runners)

601 -212242 ROBERT'S TOY 37 (B,D,F,G,S) (C Smith) M Pipe 6-11-10 A P McCoy [illegible]
602 14-11 KING OF THE DAWN 37 (D,G) (J Boulter) N Mitchell 6-11-6 C Llewellyn 117
603 /6F-333 NORDANSK 22 (F,S) (T Smith) M Madgwick 8-11-6 B Fenton 119
604 6/1226- NINE O THREE 293 (BF,CD,F,S) (Bideford Tool Ltd) A Hobbs 8-11-5 A Thornton 116
605 850/10- ROUTING 508 (CD,F) (D Jones) N Ayliffe 9-11-1 Mr S Durack (5) –
606 02511-0 BLADE OF FORTUNE 187 (CD,S) V Greenway 9-10-5 Mr J Tizzard (5) 122
607 341/PP/ ROCQUAINE 864 (G) (B Scriven) B Scriven 11-10-0 G Supple (5) –

Long handicap: Rocquaine 8-6

BETTING: 2-1 King Of The Dawn, 11-4 Robert's Toy, 4-1 Nine O Three, 11-2 Nordansk, 8-1 Routing, Blade Of Fortune, 25-1 Rocquaine.

1996: OUT RANKING 4-11-10 R Hughes (4-6 fav) M Pipe 5 ran

FORM FOCUS Robert's Toy 2½l 2nd of 3 to Goldingo in handicap hurdle at Warwick (2m, good to firm). King Of The Dawn beat Macmorris 5l in 11-runner novice hurdle at Exeter (2m 1f 110yd, good). Nordansk 57l 3rd of 6 to Kadastrof in novice chase at Kempton (2m, good to soft). Nine O Three 11l 6th of 9 to Lessons Lass in handicap hurdle at Kempton (2m 5f, good to soft). Routing 17l 7th of 9 to Star Market in handicap hurdle at Stratford (2m 110yd, good to firm); previously beat El Grando 8l in 13-runner handicap hurdle at Worcester (2m, good to firm). Blade Of Fortune 26l 11th of 13 to Classic Pal in handicap hurdle at Worcester (2m, good); previously beat Cooley's Valve 1¾l in 4-runner handicap hurdle at Newton Abbot (2m 1f, good to soft).

NINE O THREE likes it here and is more dependable than Robert's Toy

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
I Balding	3	7	42.9	J Tizzard	3	11	27.3
G McCourt	3	9	33.3	G Supple	6	27	22.2
J Old	6	19	31.6	A P McCoy	21	102	20.6
Miss H Knight	8	31	25.8	C Llewellyn	6	34	17.6
M Pipe	48	222	21.6	D Bridgwater	16	97	16.5
P Hobbs	23	108	21.3	B Fenton	3	26	11.5

☐ Richard Guest was banned for five days at Hexham yesterday for schooling in public on Jokers Charm in the Buchanan Ales Novices' Hurdle. His suspension will run on December 19, 20, 22, 26 and 27. Additionally, his mount was banned from racing for 30 days and trainer Norman Mason fined £600.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Leicester

Going: good (chase course), soft (hurdles)

1.00 (2m hdle) 1, Secret Gift (Mr S Durack, 11-2); 2, Come On Penny (10-1); 3, Erlking (9-4) Elhansko 11-8 fav 5 ran NR: Fleet Cadet, Ranger Sloane, Riverbank Rose 2½l, 2½l Mrs J Pitman Tote: £5.50; £2.40, £3.80. DF £9.90 CSF £41.70

1.30 (2m 4f 110yd ch) 1, Diwali Dancer (A P McCoy, 4-6 fav); 2, Tristram's Image (5-2); 3, Freecrown (50-1), 4 ran ¾l, dist M Pipe Tote: £1.60 DF: £2.10 CSF £2.76

2.00 (2m hdle) 1, Once More For Luck (G Lee, 2-5 fav); 2, Admiral's Guest (14-1); 3, Guy's Gamble (20-1) 7 ran 7l, 11l Mrs M Reveley Tote £1.30; £1.10, £2.90 DF £3.50 CSF £6.96

2.30 (2m 7f 110yd ch) 1, Who Is Equiname (M A Fitzgerald, 9-2); 2, Andre Laval (6-5 fav); 3, Beaurepaire (10-1) 6 ran ½l, dist N Henderson Tote £4.80; £2.00, £1.30 DF £4.10 CSF £9.70

3.00 (2m hdle) 1, Be Brave (M A Fitzgerald, 6-4 fav); 2, Native Charm (9-2); 3, I'm Meggy (3-1) 10 ran NR: Potter Again, Royal Ceilidh Nk, 15l N Henderson Tote £2.20; £2.60, £1.10, £1.50 DF £5.30 Trio £6.80 CSF £8.29

3.30 (2m 4f 110yd hdle) 1, Beechfield Flyer (G Tormey, 9-4 fav); 2, Nellogrity (5-2); 3, Tonka (4-1) 5 ran 1½l, dist W Clay Tote £3.60; £2.30, £1.10 DF £2.80 CSF £7.88

Placepot: £108.10. Quadpot: £3.90

Hexham

Going: soft, heavy in places

12.20 (2m hdle) 1, Bourbon Dynasty (B Storey, 7-4 fav); 2, J J Baboo (4-1); 3, Charming Admiral (2-1) 14 ran NR: Mons, Queens Brigade 3½l, 6l G Richards Tote £3.40; £1.70, £1.30, £3.20 DF £5.30 Trio £3.30 CSF £11.27

12.50 (3m hdle) 1, Shonara's Way (Mr R Hale, 7-1); 2, Cherry Dee (4-1); 3, Toby (9-1) Dockmaster 3-1 fav 13 ran NR: Stylish Interval Nk, 1½l P Monteith Tote £10.70; £2.20, £2.30, £4.30 DF: £20.40 CSF £33.36 Tricast £238.16 Trio £183.30 Dockmaster finished third, but after a stewards' inquiry was disqualified and placed fourth

1.20 (3m hdle) 1, Birkdale (R Supple, 5-4 fav); 2, Cypress Avenue (10-1); 3, Royal Spruce (33-1) 14 ran NR: Alcal 7l, dist L Lungo Tote £2.30; £1.40, £2.10, £7.30 DF £5.10 CSF £18.15 Trio £129.60

1.50 (3m 1f ch) 1, Chipped Out (P Carberry, 5-1); 2, Committed Schedule (3-1 fav); 3, Marnaca (10-1) 12 ran NR: Menaldi 27l, 10l Martin Todhunter Tote £8.90; £3.40, £1.50, £2.60 DF £15.90 Trio £48.90 CSF £19.58 Tricast £135.08

2.20 (2m hdle) 1, Toshiba Talk (E Callaghan, 10-1); 2, Palacegate King (5-1); 3, Rachael's Owen (9-4 fav) 8 ran Nk, 2l B Ellison Tote £16.40; £2.90, £2.40, £1.30 DF £91.90 CSF £61.39 Tricast £145.77

2.50 (2m 110yd ch) 1, Red Marauder (L O'Hara, 8-1); 2, Welsh March (7-2 fav); 3, Cuthill Hope (7-1) 13 ran NR: Forbes, Minster Glory, Shining Edge 8l, 1¼l N Mason Tote £6.30; £2.20, £2.50, £4.10 DF £25.10 Trio £150.60 CSF £38.39

3.20 (2m hdle) 1, The Butterwick Kid (L Wyer, evens fav); 2, Fassan (9-2); 3, Alpine Hideaway (10-1) 13 ran NR: Alpine Panther, Blue Lugana 6l, 6l R Fahey Tote £1.60; £1.10, £1.40, £9.70 DF £3.10 Trio £17.80 CSF £5.66

Jackpot: not won (pool of £17,617.17 carried forward to Taunton today).

Placepot: £13.20. Quadpot: £6.70.

Lingfield

Going: standard

12.10 (1m 2f) 1, White Plains (Mr O McPhail, 4-6 fav); 2, Kafir (9-1); 3, Don't Drop Bombs (9-1) 14 ran 11l, 1¼l K Burke Tote £2.00; £1.90, £2.50, £2.00 DF: £7.90 Trio £13.20 CSF: £9.62 Tricast £48.25

12.40 (1m) 1, Salty Behaviour (R Hughes, 4-1); 2, Robellion (11-4); 3, Scoppes Brow (5-4 fav) 11 ran NR: Chief's Lady ¾l, 1¼l R Hannon Tote: £4.80; £2.50, £1.10, £1.20 DF £5.40 Trio £3.00 CSF £14.13

1.10 (1m) 1, Respond (A Clark, 4-1); 2, Primary Colours (5-6 fav); 3, Implicitly (14-1) 8 ran 1l, 9l G L Moore Tote: £4.20; £1.20, £1.10, £6.00 DF £4.00 CSF £7.27 Tricast £38.49

1.40 (1m) 1, Mareeba (J Fanning, 7-2); 2, Il Destino (11-4); 3, Nsaba (14-1) Slim Prior 5-2 fav 8 ran 2l, 1¼l M Johnston Tote £5.20; £1.60, £2.00, £10.50 DF £5.70 CSF £13.54 Tricast £114.67

2.10 (2m) 1, Indigo Dawn (Dean McKeown, 7-2 fav); 2, Meilleur (6-1); 3, Signed And Sealed (4-1) 11 ran 2½l, hd M Johnston Tote £4.20; £1.10, £2.00, £1.70 DF £12.10 Trio £37.60 CSF £23.05 Tricast £80.25

2.40 (7f) 1, Diamond Drill (A Clark, 5-1); 2, Red Pepper (33-1); 3, Mac's Back (12-1) Bank On Him 7-4 fav 10 ran 8l, nk P Makin Tote £8.20; £1.90, £4.10, £2.20 DF £76.20 Trio £337.10 CSF £155.40

3.10 (7f) 1, Chipstead Bay (C Scally, 5-2 fav); 2, Salty Jack (9-2); 3, Fayik (6-1) 14 ran 1¾l, 3l K Ivory Tote £3.30; £1.20, £2.20, £2.50 DF £8.00 CSF £11.81 Tricast £61.79

3.40 (7f) 1, Italian Symphony (A McCarthy, 18-1); 2, Mozambique (9-2); 3, Badnath (6-1) Myttons Mistake 100-30 fav 14 ran 2¼l, sh hd P Evans Tote £23.20; £6.30, £1.50, £3.40 DF £101.50 Trio £322.20 CSF £86.48 Tricast £486.23

Placepot: £21.10. Quadpot: £9.90.

FAKENHAM

THUNDERER

12.40 Opera Fan. 1.10 Sharbadarid. 1.40 High Learie. 2.15 Wayfarers Way. 2.45 Lord Rooble. 3.15 Frontier Flight.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES) SIS

12.40 G B PRINT SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,702: 2m) (14 runners)

1 2431 ALBEMINE 8 (D,F,G) R Juckes 8-12-3 (7ex) Mr O McPhail (7) 115
2 0011 HIGHLY REPUTABLE 26 (CD,F,G) G Bravery 7-11-9 R Thornton (3) 102
3 /14- PHALAROPE 545 (BF,D,F,G) T Etherington 9-11-7 L Cummins (5) –
4 6641 OPERA FAN 17 (V,D,G,S) K Morgan 5-11-2 P Morris (5) 97
5 120- RUTH'S GAMBLE 245 (BF,CD,F,G) Mrs L Jewell 9-10-4 D Leahy 81
6 SUP- ZESTI 236 (G) F Howling 5-10-3 D Gallagher 88
7 2033 THOMAS CROWN 13 M R Bosley 5-10-2 I Lawrence 102
8 4645 JOHN TUFTY 21 (D,G) J Pearce 6-10-0 J Ryan 116
9 -650 LAURA LYE 28 (B,F) B De Haan 7-10-0 J R Kavanagh 92
10 00/0 MULLINGAR CON 48 B Curley 9-10-0 G Hogan (3) 69
11 6044 ERICOLIN 8 (V,D,F,G,S) Miss A Stokell 7-10-0 X Aizpuru (5) 97
12 0P-0 TODD 29 A H Harvey 6-10-0 J A McCarthy 69
13 00U0 LIFE OF BRIAN 16 J White 6-10-0 Mr R Wakley (5) 66
14 0504 BRANDON BRIDGE 14 D Geraghty 6-10-0 J Magee (3) 87

5-2 Highly Reputable, 9-2 Opera Fan, 5-1 Albemine, 10-1 Ruth's Gamble, Thomas Crown, Mullingar Con, 12-1 Phalarope, John Tufty, 14-1 others

1.10 EASTERN DAILY PRESS JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE (3-Y-O: £2,683: 2m) (11)

1 2311 MISTY CAY 26 (CD,F,G) Mrs V Ward 11-5 R Thornton (3) 89
2 00 CANADIAN FANTASY 14 Mrs V Ward 10-12 L Cummins (5) 69
3 DICK TURPIN 64F B Smart 10-12 I Lawrence –
4 HEUBACH BOY 24F J Pearce 10-12 J Ryan –
5 ISLE OF CORREGIDOR 435F Mrs J Cecil 10-12 P Hide –
6 0 MARADI 13 B Curley 10-12 G Hogan (3) –
7 OAKEN WOOD 350F N Callaghan 10-12 J R Kavanagh –
8 POKER SCHOOL 103F N Callaghan 10-12 G Bradley –
9 SCARROTS 59F N Henderson 10-12 M A Fitzgerald –
10 SHARBADARID 98F S Dow 10-12 D Gallagher –
11 KALINKA 84F C Egerton 10-7 J A McCarthy –

5-2 Isle Of Corregidor, 9-2 Misty Cay, Scarrots, 6-1 Poker School, 8-1 Kalinka, 10-1 Dick Turpin, Sharbadarid, 16-1 others

1.40 STEPHENSON SMART HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,259: 3m 110yd) (5)

1 5-23 IN TRUTH 7 (G,S) S Gollings 9-12-0 R Thornton (3) 133
2 -F41 HIGH LEARIE 16 (D,G,S) A H Harvey 7-10-13 J A McCarthy 122
3 1-11 MANOR MIEO 25 (V,C,D,F,G,S) G Prodromou 11-10-12 Michael Brennan (3) 128
4 61P/ CLEVER DICK 994 (S) Mrs L Jewell 12-10-0 D Gallagher –
5 6P0 CHARLAFRIVOLA 13 (F) T Greathead 9-10-0 J R Kavanagh –

5-4 Manor Mieo, 2-1 High Learie, 3-1 In Truth, 16-1 Clever Dick, 33-1 Charlafrivola

2.15 L L FIRTH MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,285: 2m 110yd) (9)

1 1242 LOBSTER COTTAGE 15 (D,F) K Bailey 9-11-12 Mr R Wakley (5) 112
2 144- SUPER SHARP 262 (BF,D,F,G) I Williams 9-11-10 B Powell 90
3 12-5 WAYFARERS WAY 14 (D,S) N Henderson 6-11-9 M Fitzgerald –
4 51-4 WEEHEBY 12 (D,G) Miss A Stokell 8-11-5 R Thornton (3) 82
5 -455 LASATA 15 (D,S) R Carson 12-10-13 J Power (7) 97
6 S2-0 ABSOLUTE LIMIT 35 (F) J Gifford 5-10-12 P Hide –
7 P-20 SMART LORD 26 M R Bosley 6-10-8 I Lawrence –
8 3P34 DAWN CHANCE 10 (B,D,F,S) H Haynes 11-10-0 Mr O McPhail (7) 102
9 P2P6 HIGHLAND FLAME 16 A Blackmore 8-10-0 P Henley (3) 107

9-4 Wayfarers Way, 3-1 Lobster Cottage, 9-2 Super Sharp, 7-1 Absolute Limit, 8-1 Weeheby, 12-1 Dawn Chance, 14-1 Lasata, 20-1 others

2.45 DALGETY SEAMANS—ICI NOVICES CHASE
(£3,359: 2m 5f 110yd) (6)

1 10-1 COPPER BOY 29 (D,F,G,S) R Buckler 8-11-4 B Powell 136
2 4-21 LORD ROOBLE 16 (G) J Gifford 6-11-4 P Hide 134
3 5245 AJDAR 17 (BF,F,G) Mrs S Lamyman 6-10-12 J Magee (3) –
4 P00- JUST A BEAU 311 Mrs L Jewell 6-10-12 D Leahy –
5 612- STRAIGHT ON 419 (F) Mrs D Haine 6-10-12 G Bradley –
6 F-32 OWENS QUEST 8 (G,S) T Etherington 7-10-7 L Cummins (5) 80

10-11 Copper Boy, 6-4 Lord Rooble, 12-1 Owens Quest, 14-1 Straight On, 20-1 Ajdar, 50-1 Just A Beau

3.15 FAKENHAM RACECOURSE CARAVAN SITE HANDICAP HURDLE (£3,339: 2m 4f) (8)

1 5411 FRONTIER FLIGHT 14 (D,F,G,S) Miss L Siddall 7-11-10 O Pears 111
2 13P2 SIGMA WIRELESS 8 (D,F,G) T Etherington 8-11-7 L Cummins (5) 93
3 244- NORTHERN STAR 197 (F) Miss J Wormall 6-11-3 R Thornton (3) 101
4 40/0 VASILIEV 7 (B,D,F,S) S Gollings 9-11-2 M A Fitzgerald –
5 U5-6 MISS BERTAINE 10 N Callaghan 8-11-0 G Bradley 87
6 /0-3 SALISONG 7 (C,S) J Wyle 8-10-9 Mr R Wakley (5) –
7 -326 HOLKHAM BAY 22 (B,BF) L Wordingham 5-10-0 X Aizpuru (5) 113
8 3451 CROWN AND CUSHION 8 (D,G,S) T Greathead 4-10-0 L Suthern (7) 100

9-4 Frontier Flight, 3-1 Crown And Cushion, 6-1 Sigma Wireless, 13-2 Miss Bertaine, 7-1 Holkham Bay, 8-1 Northern Star, 10-1 Vasiliev, 12-1 Salisong.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: C Egerton, 3 winners from 10 runners, 30.0%; Mrs D Haine, 7 from 25, 28.0%; G Prodromou, 4 from 15, 26.7%; G Bravery, 4 from 17, 23.5%; Mrs V Ward, 3 from 14, 21.4%

JOCKEYS: J McCarthy, 3 winners from 7 rides, 42.9%; Mr R Wakley, 4 from 25, 16.0%. Only qualifiers

MARKET RASEN

THUNDERER

12.50 Forzair. 1.20 Harlequin Chorus. 1.55 Dorlin Castle. 2.25 Night Dance. 2.55 Wade Road. 3.25 Miss Ondee.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT SIS

12.50 BOB KETT CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE
(£1,839: 2m 3f 110yd) (7 runners)

1 5-3P FAIR AND FANCY 47 (G,S) Miss M Milligan 6-12-0 E Callaghan
2 1-34 STRONG JOHN 21 (B,CD,F,G) M Sowersby 9-11-8 M H Naughton
3 1 FORZAIR 13 (S) J J O'Neill 5-11-7 D Jewett (7)
4 5401 HEVER GOLF DIAMOND 19 (B,CD,F,G,S) J R Best 4-11-2 B McGann (5)
5 3433 ESKIMO KISS 7 (S) J Mackie 4-10-12 E Husband
6 00F ABSOLUTE FOLLY 41 Mrs S Smith 5-10-2 D Elsworth (7)
7 4240 THARSIS 17 (CD,F,G,S) W Smith 12-10-0 S Taylor

5-2 Forzair, 7-2 Hever Golf Diamond, 4-1 Eskimo Kiss, 5-1 Strong John, 8-1 Fair And Fancy, 10-1 Absolute Folly, 12-1 Tharsis

1.20 DUCKWORTH FREELANDER NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (£3,106: 2m 1f 110yd) (7)

1 -3F1 HARLEQUIN CHORUS 12 (S) Mrs J Pitman 7-11-4 R Farrant
2 /040 FINNURE 15 F Jordan 5-10-12 D Byrne
3 00 LORD SABRE 32 J L Harris 4-10-12 J Supple
4 0000 TO DARN HOT 132 M Brisby 5-10-12 R Garritty
5 2-05 NIFAAF 19 K Morgan 5-10-7 A S Smith
6 0- SHARLEY COP 271 M Camacho 5-10-7 E Callaghan
7 /0-U SPRINGFIELD RHYME 19 S Gollings 6-10-7 J F Titley

1-3 Harlequin Chorus, 7-1 Nifaaf, 10-1 Finnure, Sharley Cop, 20-1 Lord Sabre, Springfield Rhyme, 25-1 To Darn Hot

1.55 DEREK CHARLES AUDI HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,007: 3m 4f 110yd) (7)

1 36-3 RUSSIAN CASTLE 86 (F,G) J Wade 6-12-0 E Callaghan
2 40-2 DORLIN CASTLE 17 (BF,S) L Lungo 9-11-1 R Supple
3 U3-6 FARNEY GLEN 17 (F,G,S) J J O'Neill 10-10-13 P Carberry
4 /03- SIRERIC 356 (S) J Bell 7-10-8 K Johnson
5 35-2 GOLD PIGEON 17 (S) S Rothwell 8-10-4 B Storey
6 40-P MAJORITY MAJOR 28 (G,S) P Cheesbrough 9-10-2 A S Smith
7 0-33 DEISE MARSHALL 10 J Wade 9-10-1 R Johnson

9-4 Dorlin Castle, 3-1 Gold Pigeon, 9-2 Deise Marshall, 7-1 Russian Castle, Farney Glen, 10-1 Sireric, 12-1 Majority Major

2.25 ROBERT PEAK HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,707: 2m 1f 110yd) (5)

1 30-6 CENTAUR EXPRESS 36 (CD,G,S) A Streeter 5-11-12 T Eley
2 3-56 OUR KRIS 28 (B,D,G) M Sowersby 5-11-0 B Storey
3 15-5 NIGHT DANCE 24 (CD,G) K Morgan 5-10-11 A S Smith
4 3111 GUTTERIDGE 6 (D,G,S) P Evans 7-10-4 (6ex) R Johnson
5 125- KILDRUMMY CASTLE 230 (F) J FitzGerald 5-10-0 F Leahy (3)

10-11 Gutteridge, 9-2 Centaur Express, 5-1 Night Dance, 11-2 Kildrummy Castle, 10-1 Our Kris

2.55 CLUGSTON NOVICES CHASE
(£3,224: 2m 1f 110yd) (3)

1 -222 TEJANO GOLD 8 (D,G,S) P Bradley 7-10-12 R Farrant
2 14-3 WADE ROAD 19 (F,S) Miss H Knight 6-10-12 J F Titley
3 -32F ZABADI 12 (BF,G,S) D Nicholson 5-10-12 R Johnson

Evens Zabadi, 11-10 Wade Road, 8-1 Tejano Gold

3.25 CONSTANT SECURITY JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE (3-Y-O: £2,408: 2m 1f 110yd) (9)

1 12 MANILENO 108 (BF,D,F) M Pipe 11-5 R Johnson
2 12 MISS ONDEE 51 (F) M Pipe 11-0 C Maude
3 ARC 75F F Jordan 10-12 D Byrne
4 3 GRATE TIMES 7 J Spearing 10-12 E Husband (3)
5 000 HITCHHIKER 12 R Woodhouse 10-12 W Dwan
6 46 HOH EXPLORER 12 D Barker 10-12 J Callaghan
7 0 NO MORE PRESSURE 14 Mrs J Ramsden 10-12 R Garritty
8 SELBERRY 26F P Haslam 10-12 M Foster
9 4 SPARKY 12 M W Easterby 10-12 P Carberry

9-4 Miss Ondee, 3-1 Manileno, 4-1 Sparky, 7-1 Grate Times, Selberry, 10-1 No More Pressure, 20-1 Arc, 25-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: D Nicholson, 10 winners from 29 runners, 34.5%; Miss H Knight, 11 from 33, 33.3%; Mrs J Ramsden, 5 from 16, 31.3%; M Pipe, 16 from 71, 22.5%; J J O'Neill, 9 from 55, 16.4%

JOCKEYS: P Carberry, 6 winners from 25 rides, 24.0%; J Titley, 6 from 31, 19.4%; R Johnson, 11 from 60, 18.3%; F Leahy, 9 from 57, 15.8%; R Farrant, 5 from 39, 12.8%; D Byrne, 9 from 71, 12.7%

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SPORT IN BRIEF

Pairs give up after ruling

■ **ICE SKATING:** Lesley Rogers and Michael Aldred, three times the British pairs champions, have retired from eligible competition and Marika Humphreys and Philip Askew, twice the British ice dance champions, have dissolved their partnership after a ruling by the British Olympic Association (BOA).

Although both couples qualified for the forthcoming Winter Olympic Games at a recent international event in Vienna, neither have met the BOA's criteria of proving that they are capable of finishing within the top half of an Olympic field and, therefore, will not compete in Nagano. Both couples have spent in the region of £15,000 over the past 12 months for ice time, coaching and choreography in an effort to go to Japan.

It will be the first time that Great Britain has not had a full ice skating team at a Winter Olympics.

Graf return

■ **TENNIS:** Steffi Graf is to use the Australian Open next month to relaunch her career. Graf, a four-time winner of the tournament, has missed the second half of this year with a knee injury and her ranking has slid from No 1 to No 28.

She will join Martina Hingis, the defending champion, Monica Seles and Venus Williams, the US Open finalist, at Melbourne Park from January 19. Only Jana Novotna, of the world's top ten, has not entered. All the men's top ten players, led by Pete Sampras, the world No 1, will contest the event.

Scotland slip

■ **CURLING:** Scotland were beaten by Germany in their final group A1 match at the European championships in Fussen yesterday. Andy Kapp, the world championship silver medal-winner and a former European title-holder, playing on his home ice, sealed the 6-4 win for Germany on an extra end of play. The Scots went on to win the top-of-group tie-break draw from the hat, with Denmark second and Germany third.

England finished in fourth after playing a match they would prefer to forget against the Austrians, winning 7-6, once again after an extra end of play, after an unimpressive performance. They now play Wales, the group B winners, for a place in the quarter-finals.

RUGBY UNION: CUP-HOLDERS BROADEN THEIR SEARCH FOR NEW TALENT

Explosive Capes prepares to tackle new role with Leicester

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

Capes, son of the former Great Britain shot putter Geoff, is hoping to use his speed and power to good effect in rugby union, after a career in American football with the London Monarchs

LEICESTER will unveil today their latest and certainly their biggest signing even if he has yet to make his name in rugby union. Lewis Capes, son of the international shot putter, Geoff Capes, has agreed a two-year deal with the cup-holders in the latest phase of his nomadic sporting career.

Capes, 26, is 6ft 4in and weighs in at around 22st, dimensions that suggest a career in the tight forwards: he is likely to play prop in Leicester's development XV (for whom he made his debut last weekend) while the club's coaching staff assess his potential, but he has already impressed observers at Welford Road with his explosive play deriving not only from a background in athletics but also from American football.

More to the point, however, is that Capes is the perfect illustration of what Clive Woodward seeks to bring to English rugby. Woodward, the national coach, has stressed the need to investigate other sporting disciplines for potential rugby union players; it is not an original thesis but the influx of overseas players has stressed the importance of throwing the widest possible net in the quest for players.

Woodward's comments relating to rugby league players refer to the possibility of attracting youngsters brought up in that code to rugby union; they might as well refer to basketball, football or any sport that combines a dynamic approach with good hand-eye co-ordination and all-round athleticism. The point is to demonstrate that rugby union offers an attractive and well-paid option to any youngster seeking a professional sporting career.

Capes played in Millfield's first XV before attending Santa Monica University, where he developed his American football career. He returned to England three years ago and joined London Monarchs as a defensive lineman: "It's a brawl in there," he said during his two years with the Monarchs. "It's an all-out fight for survival and I love it.

"It's the toughest position because you are always getting hammered but I like leading with my head. It just runs in the family." Apart from his lengthy career in English athletics, Capes Sr developed a career based on his claims to be the world's strongest man — and proving it in a series of bizarre feats of strength. His son may find the front row of the scrum tame by comparison.

Though the Allied Dunbar Premiership resumes on Saturday for the first time in a month, Will Carling will not be part of it. The former England captain has been omitted from the 25-strong squad named by Harlequins for their meeting with Wasps, the fading league title-holders, at the Stoop Memorial Ground, after family illness forced him to miss training sessions.

"I told Will that I wasn't going to pick him," Andy Keast, the director of rugby, said. "This is now a professional game and you have to train to play." Much of Carling's attention over the past month has also gone on presenting ITV's refurbished rugby programmes centred round the series of internationals which concluded last Saturday with England's enthralling draw against New Zealand.

Zinzan Brooke, who made his last appearance in an All Black jersey during that game, and who will join Harlequins next year, will be among the spectators.

Nick Beal, the Northampton utility back, will be missing until April because he requires treatment to both his legs. Beal had an operation yesterday on damaged tendons in his right knee and he is suffering from the stress problem, shin splints, in his left leg for which he was initially diagnosed during the British Isles tour of South Africa last summer. He hopes to be fit to play in Northampton's last eight premiership games.

New Zealand act on global fixture warning

By David Hands

WHILE others talk about decreasing the demands on their leading players, New Zealand have done so by reducing their international programme next year to seven matches. This contrasts with the 13 that Australia seek to put in place during the next calendar year, and 12 by South Africa.

The match against England at Twickenham last Saturday was the twelfth by the All Blacks in six months. "The team management were concerned and, as a result, the New Zealand Rugby Football Union board concentrated on an even spread and reduced the number of internationals," David Moffett, the board's chief executive, said.

New Zealand will meet England twice, at Dunedin and Auckland in June, and then confine themselves to tri-nations business. In contrast, England are likely to play a dozen internationals next year, four in the five nations' championship, four on tour during the summer and another four next autumn, when they play qualifying matches for the 1999 World Cup.

Though yet to be confirmed by the Rugby Football Union, England's summer commitments are likely to open with a Cook Cup international against Australia in Brisbane on June 6, before they reach New Zealand for a five-match tour. On the way home they are scheduled to play South Africa in Cape Town on July 4, which will give the players barely a week to recover from the rigours of the journey across time zones from Auckland.

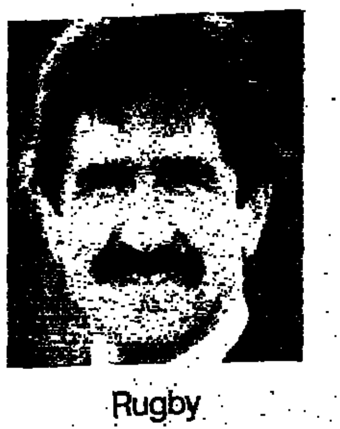
It is a trip that several English representatives with the British Isles made in reverse in July, from Johannesburg to Sydney, where they duly lost to Australia by four tries to none. The Australians can testify to the hardship of flying from the Antipodes to South Africa, where they suffered their heaviest defeat at the end of the tri-nations last summer.

South Africa are expected to play home-and-away matches with three of the four home unions next year. Ireland and Wales tour there during the summer and when the Springboks visit Britain and Ireland in the autumn, for what they hope will be a rehearsal for the defence of the World Cup the following year, they are scheduled to play each of the home unions.

They are also due to play in Perth, the latest international centre for the Australian Rugby Union, which has long sought to encourage the game in Western Australia. After the success of their match against New Zealand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground last summer, the All Blacks return there on July 11, while the South Africans play at Perth's Subiaco Oval on July 18.

Best of British must bridge cultural divide

GERALD DAVIES



Rugby Commentary

Nothing has confirmed the difference between the new world and the old in rugby so much as the attitude and response to professionalism. For the three big rugby-playing countries of the southern hemisphere, the transfer from amateur rugby has been achieved without too much aggravation and prolonged self-analysis. They saw the world as it was and responded accordingly. They did not carry too much baggage — unlike their European counterparts, who had too much to carry.

This is not merely a financial matter, but one involving the place that sport takes in society at large and the personal commitment that a player wishes to make. Since to participate in sport was born of the leisured classes in this country of the last century, the ethos, by and large, has been that of the dilettante; not really of very great importance, something to while away a few empty hours. If not all the participants were of the gentry and the ambitious middle classes, then the administrators invariably were. Times change, but the remnants of this background are still with us today, even if only psychologically.

France is not too far removed from its European neighbours across the Channel. Rugby was all part of an extensive social scene, where the participants were only too happy, once the game was over, to turn a glad eye to the good life elsewhere. There were fingers in the till and players were remunerated with cash or a little bistro down town, but not so much as to be of any great importance.

It was not quite like this in the southern hemisphere. Whatever the reason — the colonial desire to hit back at the mother country, the frontier attitude to survival — sport was a serious matter, and the realistic attitude to any contest was that it was there to be won. This was not only a matter of national pride, it was a matter of a player's self-respect. The adage that people play rugby to get fit in this country, not get fit to play rugby, has changed to any substantial degree only in recent years.

> 'The southern hemisphere remains a step or two ahead'

Chris Laidlaw, the New Zealand scrum half and erstwhile diplomat, relates the tale of when he was about to make his first appearance in Wales. Knowing of the legendary contests at Cardiff Arms Park and the great tradition of meetings between Wales and New Zealand, Laidlaw was nervous. Wilson Whineray, the captain of the 1963 All Blacks, noticed this and advised the young man to cast an eye at the Wales team when they stood for their national anthem and to contrast their physiques, sagging probably, against those of his colleagues. It did the trick and gave him confidence.

New Zealand have always recognised the physical requirements that a game of rugby demands. The same could be said of South Africa. Anyone who visited Stellenbosch University during Dr Danie Craven's days could not fail to be open-eyed and slack-jawed at the commando-style, pain-inducing circuit that the students had to survive as part of their rugby preparation.

If Australia came late to rugby union prominence, they have always brought with them the tough competitive edge that has always characterised their bigger sports, cricket and rugby league.

The southern hemisphere remains a step or two ahead. For all the grandeur of the spectacle of England's performance last Saturday, it should only give a crumb of comfort. There is a long way to go. The next six months sees the continuation of a hectic international list of fixtures bordering on lunacy. Both Clive Woodward, the England coach, and Lawrence Dallaglio, his captain, are critical of the game's present structure. They are quite right. It is in chaos and in desperate need of swift attention.

But in criticising the structure, they must be hard-nosed enough not to be deflected from another area of concern. If players are beginning physically to match their southern hemisphere counterparts, then their skills of handling, passing and of judgment must also be matched and bettered.

Once again, we in Europe, where England remain in the lead, are attempting to catch up. The point is this: during the past seven years of England's international success, at a time when it was claimed that the club structure was the most comprehensive in the world, the new tactical ideas still emerged from the southern hemisphere. Southern hemisphere analysis of rugby's potential remains more far-sighted. Structures are fine and necessary, but, when things go wrong, we must not always be tempted to target them as a subject of abuse and excuse.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Toronto 82 Charlotte 95; Washington 120 New Jersey 99; Atlanta 81 Miami 97; Detroit 92 Denver 83; Chicago 100 New York 82; Minnesota 99 Seattle 108; Dallas 92 Los Angeles Clippers 99; Houston 108 San Antonio 78; Phoenix 107 Vancouver 85; Sacramento 113 Utah 101

BOWLS

COATBRIDGE: CIS Scottish Masters: Singles: Quarter-final: H Duff (Scot) bt J Henry (Ire) 7-4, 1-7, 7-3. Semi-finals: J Price (Wales) bt G Robertson (Scot) 7-5, 3-7, 7-3; P Corsie (Scot) bt Duff 7-2, 4-7, 7-5. Final: Price bt Corsie 7-0, 7-3, 7-4.

CRICKET

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP: Mysore: Pakistan 65 (S Nelson 4-9, 30.4 overs); Denmark 66-2 (29.3 overs). Denmark win by eight wickets. Agra: West Indies v Holland — abandoned. New Delhi: India v Sri Lanka — abandoned. Madras: Australia v Ireland — abandoned.

CURLING

FUSSEN, Germany: European championships: Men: Fifth round: Group A: Scotland 4 Germany 6; England 7 Austria 6. Final positions: Group A1: 1, Scotland; 2, Denmark; 3, Germany; 4, England; 5, Holland; 6, Austria. Group A2: 1, Sweden; 2, Finland; 3, Switzerland; 4 equal, Norway and Luxembourg; 6, Italy. Group B: Wales 5 Russia 3. Final positions: 1, Wales; 2, France; 3, Russia; 4, Czech Republic; 5, Bulgaria. Women: Group A: Switzerland 8 Scotland 6. Final positions: Group A1: 1, Switzerland; 2, Scotland; 3, Norway; 4, Luxembourg; 5, Italy; 6, France. A2: 1, Germany; 2, Denmark; 3 equal, Sweden and Finland; 5, Czech Republic; 6, Austria. Group B: England 6 Holland 13. Final positions: 1, England; 2, Holland; 3, Russia.

FOOTBALL

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Wimbledon 0 Arsenal 0. Postponed: Charlton v Queens Park Rangers; Portsmouth v Oxford Utd; Watford v Swindon.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Second division: Postponed: Blackpool v Wrexham.
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Postponed: Chichester v Wick, Littlehampton v Selsey. John O'Hara League Cup: Second round: Postponed: Eastbourne Town v Ringmer.

Tuesday's late results

UEFA CUP: Third round, second leg: Aston Villa 2 Steaua Bucharest 0 (Villa win 3-2 on agg). Spartak Moscow (Russ) 1 Karlsruhe SC (Ger) 0 (aet: 0-0 after 90min; Spartak win 1-0 on agg); Auxerre (Fr) 2 Twente Enschede (Holl) 0 (Auxerre win 3-0 on agg); Lazio (It) 1 Rapid Vienna (Austria) 0 (Lazio win 3-0 on agg); Schalke 04 (Ger) 2 Sporting Braga (Por) 0 (Schalke win 2-0 on agg); Internazionale (It) 3 RC Strasbourg (Fr) 0 (Inter win 3-2 on agg); Atlético Madrid (Sp) 1 Croatia Zagreb (Cro) 0 (Atlético win 2-1 on agg).
NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Charlton 2 Sheffield Utd 1, Portsmouth 3 Wolverhampton 2.
AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: First round: Northern section: Carlisle 1 Oldham 0 (aet; Carlisle win on golden goal). Chesterfield 0 Grimsby 1; Doncaster 0 Rochdale 1, Hull 2 Scarborough 1; Preston 3 Darlington 2 (aet; Preston win on golden goal); Scunthorpe 2 Chester 1, Wigan 2 Lincoln 0. Southern section: Barnet 1 Walsall 2; Cardiff 0 Millwall 2; Fulham 1 Watford 0; Gillingham 0 Peterborough 1, Leyton Orient 1 Colchester 0; Northampton 1 Plymouth 1; Southend 0 Wycombe 1.
VAUXHALL CONFERENCE: Halifax 4 Northwich 2.
BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Aberdeen 0 Celtic 2; Dundee Utd 0 Hearts 0.
TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP: First-round replay: Montrose 2 Cowdenbeath 1.
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Cup: Second round: Fisher 2 Chelmsford 0, Grantham 3 Raunds T 3; Sutton Coldfield 4 Blakenall 0.
REPRESENTATIVE MATCH: Dr Martens League XI 1 FA XI 2.
WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Ramsgate 1 Thamesmead 1.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Alfreton Town 0 Hyde Utd 0; Frickley 3 Winsford Utd 0; Marine 3 Accrington Stanley 1; Runcorn 3 Lancaster 0.
RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Berkhamsted 4 Aldershot Town 2. Third division: Flackwell Heath 1 Harlow 3; Ford 1 Southall 1; Ware 1 Lewes 1; Wingate and Finchley 4 Aveley 5.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Sheffield Wednesday 1 Derby 4. First division: Coventry 1 Sunderland 2; Manchester City 3 West Bromwich 1; Notts County 3 Huddersfield 3.
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Pagham 3 Horsham YMCA 2.
FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Liverpool 0 Everton 2.
INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Rocester 0 Oldbury Utd 2; West Midlands Police 1 Barwell 0.
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Second round: Blackpool 0 Everton 1; Exeter 1 Arsenal 1; Queens Park Rangers 3 Southend 2; Plymouth 0 Fulham 3; Wycombe 2 Welling Utd 0. Second-round replays: Tranmere 5 Sheffield Utd 3, Crystal Palace 2 Norwich 1.
THE STAR LEINSTER SENIOR CUP: Quarter-final: Bohemians 3 Ards 0.
NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Arnold 3 Hatfield Main 1.
GILBERT LEAGUE CUP: Second round, second leg: Aberystwyth 0 Ebbw Vale 0 (Ebbw Vale win 4-2 on agg).
ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Bilston Community College 2 David Lloyd AFC 1.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Bemerton Heath Harl 2 BAT 1; Bournemouth 1 East Cowes 0; Portsmouth RN 0 AFC Newbury 2.
JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Sudbury Wanderers 4 Soham 1.
BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Cup: Second round, first leg: Ludlow 1 Gornal 1.

HANDBALL

BONN: Women's world championship: Last 16: Poland 30 France 20; South Korea 29 Czech Republic 26, Norway 24 Austria 18, Germany 33 Belarus 23, Denmark 30 Hungary 25, Croatia 30 Angola 22; Russia 28 Ivory Coast 20.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Detroit 7 Vancouver 5; New York Islanders 1 Calgary 3; Los Angeles 1 Pittsburgh 2.

POOLS DIVIDENDS

LITTLEWOODS: Treble chance: 24pts £1,076 05, 23pts £13 75, 22pts £1 70. Half-time result: 21pts £183 75. Four draws: £5.55. Nine homes: £1,411 00. Five aways: £19.85.
VERNONS: Treble chance (third dividend cancelled as it would have been less than £1): 24pts £380 95, 23pts £8.25. Super shots: £17.65 (paid on three correct). Premier 10: £79.50 (paid on eight correct).
ZETTERS: Treble chance: 24pts £118.25, 23pts £2. Four aways: £1.50. Eight homes: £25 80. Four draws: £2. All draws treble chance: 24pts £3.10. Fair five: £13.35.

RUGBY UNION

IRELAND (v Italy, December 20): K Nowlan (St Mary's College); D Hickie (St Mary's College), R Henderson (Wasps), M McCall (London Irish), K Maggs (Bristol); D Humphreys (London Irish), N Hogan (Oxford University/London Irish); R Corrigan (Greystones), K Wood (Harlequins, captain), P Wallace (Saracens), P Johns (Saracens), M O'Kelly (London Irish), D O'Grady (Sale), K Dawson (London Irish), E Miller (Leicester). Replacements: C O'Shea (London Irish), B O'Meara (Cork Constitution), E Elwood (Galwegians), A Clarke (Northampton), J Fitzpatrick (London Irish), D Erskine (Sale).
REPRESENTATIVE MATCH: Royal Navy 20 Royal New Zealand Navy 10 (at US Portsmouth).
SCHOOLS MATCHES: Daily Mail Under-15 Cup: First round: Boston GS 24 Loughborough GS 10; Lord Manners Bakewell 24 Arnold Hill 10; Calday Grange 60 Stonyhurst 0. Other matches: Hereford Cathedral 12 Old Swinford Hosp 12; Marlborough 24 Wellington Coll 17; Merchant Taylor's 10 Windsor 5; Whitgift 46 Eltham 22.

SNOOKER

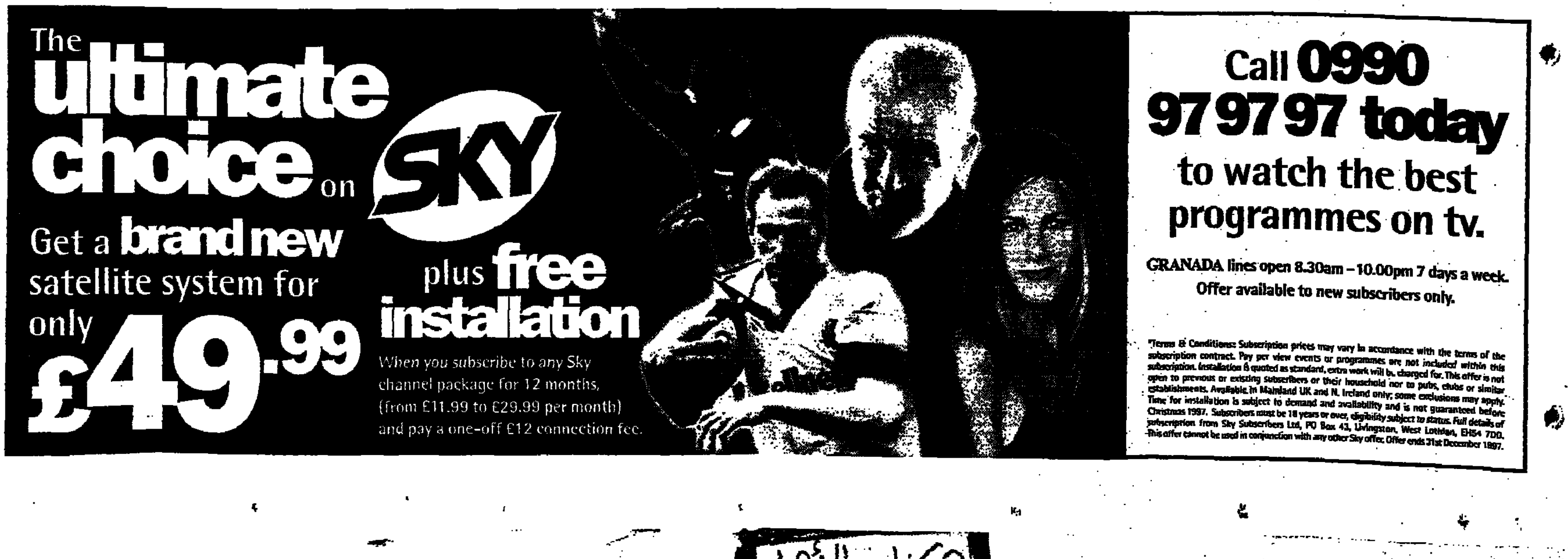
BINGEN: German Open: Last 16: K Doherty (Ire) bt Shokat Ali (Pak) 5-2; A Hamilton (Eng) bt J Ferguson (Eng) 5-2; J Parrott (Eng) bt S Lee (Eng) 5-3.

SQUASH

CAIRO: Chrysler Heliopolis Open Championships: First round: Jansher Khan (Pak) bt A Hands (Eng) 15-4, 15-12, 15-7; O Elborolossy (Egypt) bt S Meads (Eng) 12-15, 15-10, 15-6, 15-8; A Wagih (Egypt) bt J White (Aus) 17-16, 15-11, 15-8; M Heath (Scot) bt M E Hafiz (Egypt) 15-5, 15-8, 12-15, 17-15; B Davis (Aus) bt Mohammed Zaman Gul (Pak) 15-5, 15-7, 15-9; A Shabana (Egypt) bt D Ryan (Ire) 12-15, 15-10, 15-5, 15-6; S Casteleyn (Bel) bt A Faizy (Egypt) 15-11, 17-15, 15-9; A Barada (Egypt) bt M Morsi (Egypt) 15-12, 15-11, 15-8.
HONG KONG: Pak Fah Yeow world doubles championships: First qualifying round: Men: Group A: Australia bt Holland 15-9, 17-15; Pakistan bt Canada 15-11, 13-15, 15-12; Hong Kong bt United States 16-17, 15-9, 15-12. Group B: England (C Walker and M Cairns) bt Scotland (A Thomson and G Sword) 15-7, 15-9; New Zealand bt Singapore 15-12, 15-12; Malaysia bt South Africa 15-13, 15-9. Women: Group A: Australia bt Philippines 15-9, 15-11; South Africa bt Malaysia 15-6, 13-15, 15-6; United States bt Canada 17-16, 15-14. Group B: England (C Jackman and S Wright) bt Singapore 15-9, 15-8; New Zealand bt Japan 15-7, 15-6; Hong Kong bt Scotland (S and H Macfie) 15-12, 17-15. Second qualifying round: Men: Group A: Australia bt Canada 15-10, 15-9; Pakistan bt United States 17-15, 15-9; Holland bt Hong Kong 15-11, 17-16. Group B: England bt Malaysia 15-5, 12-15, 15-7; New Zealand bt Scotland 15-10, 15-8; South Africa bt Singapore 15-9, 15-5. Women: Group A: Australia bt Malaysia 15-12, 15-7; South Africa bt United States 15-10, 15-4; Canada bt Philippines 15-13, 15-11. Group B: England bt Scotland 15-13, 11-15, 15-8; New Zealand bt Singapore 15-7, 15-3; Hong Kong bt Japan 15-3, 15-5.

WEIGHTLIFTING

CHIANG MAI, Thailand: World championships (overall results): Men: 76kg: 1, Y Yotov (Bul) 367.5kg; 2, G Gardev (Bul) 365; 3, A Kozlowski (Pol) 362.5. Women: 64kg: 1, Chen Yanqing (China) 230kg; 2, Chen Ju-Lien (Taiwan) 225; 3, L Neelamestti (India) 217.5



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Tairi's strength and speed have helped to make her a key member of the New Zealand netball team

Silver Ferns draw on their roots

The women in black may not offer the haka, but they still provide a stern challenge of sporting resolve

SARAH POTTER

The men in black may have packed up their haka and returned to New Zealand, but English sport cannot breathe a sigh of relief just yet. The women are here, they play netball — dressed in black — and they are called the Silver Ferns.

Teresa Tairi, 24, plays goal shooter or goal attack for the team ranked third in the world. Though not towering by netball standards — she is just over six feet tall — her considerable strength and speed make her one of the most dangerous target players. She comes from Cook Island in the Pacific Ocean and is proud of her Maori roots.

"I love my culture and my people," she said. "There aren't too many Cook Islanders playing for New Zealand at the moment, so it makes me very proud. The Pacific Island people, as you can see with Jonah Lomu in the rugby, tend to be bigger sized and bigger boned. We have a lot of strength."

England might be relieved that Tairi is presently hampered by a sore shoulder. The home side will be grateful for any advantage in its attempt to reverse an embarrassing trend. Before the start of the second of a three-match series in Birmingham last night, England had managed just one win in the 48 meetings since 1949, the latest defeat coming in Brighton last weekend. National Lottery funding is changing the once barren landscape of amateur sport and English netball is keen to forge a brighter outlook for itself.

Perhaps like the one already enjoyed in New Zealand. Second only to rugby union in its spectator appeal, netball attracts considerable media attention and financial backing. It is the most popular women's sport but is also played by men, who have separate leagues, and so suffers none of the male derision heaped on it here. All the Silver Ferns are well-known faces on New Zealand television. For Tairi, modest and self-effacing, the glory of fame is not as satisfying as the unifying power of sport.

Before becoming an administrator at Auckland Girls Grammar School she spent three years as a recreation programmer working with street kids in South Auckland.

"At the pool or in the gym we'd get a lot of kids who just didn't want to go home or who didn't have homes to go to," she said. "They'd see my face on television and that's where the role model part would come in. I'd try to be like a big sister because, although you can't look after them all the time, you can show them good values."

According to Tairi, Pacific Island people are very home and church orientated. She claims that her success would not have been possible without the sacrifices made by her mother and two sisters. "Mum was a sole parent, so it wasn't easy," she said. "Financially we weren't struggling, but we didn't have enough to buy extras, like training gear. We didn't have a car and mum took two jobs to pay for my netball."

Now she has reached the highest level, all her expenses are covered and, although she made her debut in 1993, she still finds travelling with the Silver Ferns exciting. "We are in a rebuilding time at the moment with a lot of young players, but we know that when we step onto the court we look very intimidating. Women in black, it's such a strong colour and I think we're all aware of it."

The Silver Ferns stop short of displaying the sort of cultural showmanship issued by the All Blacks, although there is, apparently, a female version of the haka. "It involves a lot of chanting and wailing," Tairi said, "but the girls aren't prepared to try to learn it! We stick to the songs we all know."

Maori culture is never more than a whisper away, however. "Mana" is Maori for pride and when a group of their women stand together they generate, through their presence alone, a unifying force. "It's almost a spiritual thing," Tairi, said, "even the non-Maori players feel it. It's part of our culture and it's really positive for the Silver Ferns. We have a lot of mana."

Tairi and her team-mates also have a lot of respect for their opponents. They know English hearts are set on a long overdue win, but with unseen powers to contend with, not to mention the physical presence of black-clad six footers everywhere, it hardly seems sensible to dare hope for a home win. May some other force be with England. History says they will need it.

SQUASH

England's wide boys courting success

FROM COLIN MCQUILLAN IN HONG KONG

SQUASH, for decades difficult to sell, particularly on television, has uncovered a new formula of spectator appeal. On new courts built at the Hong Kong Football Club, with high-tech sliding sidewalls that convert four 21ft-wide singles courts into three 25ft-wide doubles courts at the touch of a button, the World Squash Federation (WSF) has launched its first World Doubles Championship.

In the hands of the tireless, super-fit elite of the game, four people on a court designed for two leads inexorably to extended defensive marches of near-soporific quality. Therefore, after considerable research, the WSF added four feet to the width of the standard court.

On the 25ft courts of the football club, a luxurious facility financed by a recent land swap with the wealthy Hong Kong Jockey Club, England yesterday defeated Scotland and Malaysia in the men's qualifying rounds of the new world event, then Singapore and Scotland in the women's qualifying rounds. Later in the week, when play progresses on to the first all-transparent Perspex doubles showcourt, a mixed doubles event will be added.

Chris Walker and Mark Cairns, both world top-ten players, were involved in a 51-minute 15-5, 12-15, 15-7 battle with two Malaysian youngsters, Kenneth Low and Michael Soo, that plainly entertained the players themselves and drew fascinated spectators from all over the vast club, even away from the gallery overlooking the Wednesday evening meeting on the neighbouring racecourse.

The English women, Cassandra Jackman and Sue Wright, surprised by the fast learning curve of the Scottish sisters, Senga and Helen Macfie, who had earlier lost to Hong Kong, had to produce a determined third game that stretched their opponents to the farthest reaches of the enlarged competitive territory.

CRICKET

Hollioake quick to make positive mark as captain

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN DUBAI

FOUR teams have arrived here for the Champions Trophy, a 50-over competition that begins in Sharjah today. Pakistan come hotfoot from trouncing West Indies 3-0 in their home Test series; West Indies, therefore, step contritely. The other teams, England and India, play the opening game today. They lie somewhere between Pakistan, the favourites, and West Indies, who will be lucky to win a match.

England are the only side here who have not come direct from a Test series. For them, the serious business of the winter lies ahead, when they go the Caribbean next month. That is not to say that this tournament lacks value. It is of immense importance in helping to find the team that contests the World Cup in England in 18 months' time. The road to that World Cup starts here.

If Adam Hollioake is to retain the captaincy along every step of that road, then clearly it is going to be a bracing journey. He held a most affirmative press conference yesterday morning and then, after the players had practised under lights at the ground, he helped to select a side notable for one omission: his younger brother.

Ben Hollioake, the junior member of the party at 20 years and one month, made a cracking start to his one-day international career, against Australia at Lord's in the Texaco Trophy in May, when he scored 63 runs from 48 balls, and was supposed to bat first wicket down here and bowl medium pace. He still might but, for the time being, he must wait for his chance.

After the two warm-up matches in Lahore last week, Hollioake Sr and David Lloyd, the coach, have reconsidered the balance of the side. Nick Knight bats at No 3, and Hollioake Jr sits it out. The other either-or places go to Dean Headley, who is preferred to Peter Martin with the new ball, and Robert Croft, who gets the spinning vote over Ashley Giles.

It is a mild surprise because Ben Hollioake gives his captain the option of having another bowler and he has done little wrong with the bat since his dramatic promotion last summer. Far from it; he has done a lot right. Against that must be set Knight's excellent record for England in one-day cricket and his smartness in the field, where he has one of the best pair of hands in the team.

David Graveney, the tour manager, said that the selection had been difficult. "They were all tight decisions," Graveney said. "We have picked what we think is our best team for this match, but obviously we have to see how we play and how the pitch plays in this opening game."

The players have knitted together most impressively over the past week. There are no cliques, despite the presence of five Surrey players and three each from Warwickshire and Kent, and the mood of relaxed concentration supports the belief that, despite their lack of competitive international action, England have the ability to reach the final. To do that, they must win today against an India side whose batting is stronger than its bowling.

"We are in a good situation," Adam Hollioake said, "because everybody is in pretty good form, and it's nice that the first problem is who to leave out rather than who to pick. Once we won that first match in Lahore last week we realised that things were going as well as we could have hoped. We are dying to get out there and show what we can do."

Hollioake thought that it was easier to lead this team than Surrey, who he captained to Benson and Hedges Cup success last season. He praised the players around him, senior and junior, for helping to forge the right spirit and, with an interesting turn of phrase, he said: "Everybody has huge aspirations." Note the word: to aspire, not simply to hope.

As for his own aspirations, he was quite definite. "It is a major honour to captain England, but more than that I love playing in a winning team," he said. "I would rather play in a winning team than captain a losing one. I would not lose any sleep if I was not captain of England, but I would if I was not in the team."

Of all the players who stand to benefit from the cricket in the next week — of whom Dougie Brown and Matthew Fleming can perhaps make the most ground — Hollioake can set out his stall, as football managers say. The signs are good. He has certainly made an impressive start.

DETAILS

ENGLAND: A J Hollioake (captain), A J Stewart, A D Brown, N V Knight, G A Hick, G P Thorpe, M A Ealham, D R Brown, M V Fleming, R D B Croft, D W Headley

INDIA (probable): S R Tendulkar (captain), N S Sidhu, S C Ganguly, R S Dravid, M Azharuddin, A D Jadeja, R R Singh, S S Karim, A Kumble, J Srinath, B K V Prasad.

TROPHY FIXTURES: Today: India v England. Tomorrow: Pakistan v West Indies. Dec 13: England v West Indies. Dec 14: India v Pakistan. Dec 15: Pakistan v England. Dec 16: India v West Indies. Dec 19: Final.

CRAIG PRENTIS / ALLSPORT

Leng, left, and Edwards celebrate after England's opening defeat of South Africa in Hyderabad yesterday

Edwards opens case for defence

FROM THRASY PETROPOULOS IN HYDERABAD

THE England women's team launched their defence of the World Cup with a convincing victory over South Africa here yesterday. Overnight rain reduced the contest to 20 overs per side, but it was a surprise that this match was able to get underway at all.

The players arrived at the ground to find a sodden wicket and the groundstaff burning off the excess water with coal. Rudimentary it may have been, but it worked and play began in the afternoon.

As expected, Charlotte Edwards opened the batting with Jan Brittin, but England were pegged back by the South Africa opening bowlers. The need to increase the tempo accounted for Brittin's wicket, a run out after a mid-wicket mix-up.

Two more wickets followed, but Edwards, 17, stood firm and was soon into her stride, striking four crisp boundaries on her way to top-scoring with 38 off 50 balls. The manner of her dismissal, stumped aiming an ugly heave to mid-wicket off Kim Price, was out of character with what had been a mature and stylish innings. Some useful hitting by Jane Cassar, who contributed 24 in 28 balls, boosted the total to 94 for seven, with Cassar run out off the final ball of the twentieth over.

South Africa's reply faltered at the start when Karen Smithies picked up three wickets, including two in successive balls, as they reached 42 for three in the seventh over. Kathryn Leng, the leg spinner, then took charge, completing her four overs for the loss of just nine runs.

Edwards, who had not bowled for England before, picked up two wickets in her first over of leg spin, a feat that earned her the responsibility of bowling the final over, with South Africa needing 13 runs to win. They made just five of them, for the loss of Alta Kotze's wicket.

Edwards, who scored a century when these teams met at Taunton earlier this year, was unsurprisingly named Player of the Match, or Eve of the Match, as the Indian organisers are calling the accolade. "I was surprised when I was asked to bowl as it was the first time I had bowled for England," she said. "I was ready for the challenge, though, and because it was spinning, even wide balls were difficult to hit."

This win gives England six points and a chance of finishing pool A as the leading team, ensuring an easier draw in the quarter-finals. Ireland shared three points with Australia when their match in Madras was rained off, boosting their chances of reaching the knockout stage. Neither team was happy with the decision, which was made because the umpires felt that the pitch was "too soft".

Denmark cruised to an eight-wicket victory over Pakistan in Mysore, reaching 66 for two in 29.3 overs in reply to Pakistan's 65 off 30.4.

SCOREBOARD FROM HYDERABAD

ENGLAND	
J Brittin run out	3
C Edwards st Terblanche b Price	38
B Daniels lbw b Kotze	2
S Metcalfe c Terblanche b Price	7
†J Cassar run out	24
*K Smithies c Olivier b Kuylaars	3
K Leng st Terblanche b Eksteen	10
M Reynard not out	0
Extras (lb 5, w 2)	7
Total (7 wkts, 20 overs)	94

S Redfern, C Taylor and D Connor did not bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-14, 2-22, 3-33, 4-68, 5-89, 6-92, 7-92.

BOWLING: Kotze 4-0-13-1; Laing 4-0-15-0; Eksteen 4-0-19-1; Price 4-1-17-2; Kuylaars 4-0-25-1

Umpires: O K Krishna and C Kumar

SOUTH AFRICA	
L Olivier st Cassar b Smithies	5
E Akehurst c Daniels b Smithies	13
H Dawes st Cassar b Smithies	0
K Laing c Daniels b Leng	14
D Reid run out	5
†D Terblanche b Connor	8
C Eksteen c Connor b Edwards	3
A Kuylaars b Edwards	1
A Kotze st Cassar b Edwards	13
*K Price not out	15
A Bezuidenhout not out	1
Extras (lb 3, w 5, nb 1)	9
Total (9 wkts, 20 overs)	87

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-10, 2-10, 3-30, 4-42, 5-46, 6-56, 7-58, 8-61, 9-86

BOWLING: Redfern 2-0-10-0; Smithies 4-0-26-3; Reynard 4-0-10-0; Leng 4-1-9-1; Edwards 3-0-15-3; Connor 3-0-14-1

Waugh makes defiant stand

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

STEVE WAUGH, the Australia captain, said yesterday that wholesale changes and new tactics were not the answer to the poor batting of Australia's limited-overs side.

Waugh said that his revamped one-day team remained in good spirits and was confident of a return to batting form despite another bad performance against South Africa in the World Series Cup in Melbourne on Tuesday. Australia restricted South Africa to 170 for eight off their 50 overs, yet were routed for 125 with more than ten overs to spare. It was a similar story last week in Sydney when South Africa were restricted to 200, only to dismiss Australia for 133 in 38 overs.

"The answer is not to throw the bat at the ball, that's the last thing we need to do," Waugh said. "It's been a frustrating time because we know we are better than that with the bat. I think this is the best one-day team Australia has at the moment and we just have to put it together with the bat." Waugh is under pressure to perform, both as batsman and limited-overs captain, a role that he took over from the deposed Mark Taylor.

Waugh, after a moderate Test series against New Zealand in which he passed 50 only once, has had a series of disappointing scores in the one-day matches. "Sure, I'm disappointed with the way I've batted," he said. "But I haven't batted any differently because I'm captain and I haven't felt any pressure batting because I'm captain."

Waugh also dismissed suggestions that the dropping of Ian Healy, the vastly-experienced Test wicketkeeper, from the one-day team had upset the squad. "The Ian Healy issue is over and it's had no effect on the side," he said.

The injured Australia opening bowlers, Paul Reiffel, who has a strained hamstring, and Glenn McGrath, who pulled a muscle in his stomach last week, are expected to be asked to prove their fitness for the opening Test match against South Africa, which starts in Melbourne on Boxing Day, in the next round of Sheffield Shield matches.

BOWLS

Price rises to meet Corsie's final assault

JOHN PRICE won the CIS (Insurance) Scottish Masters title for a record fourth time at Coatbridge yesterday (David Rhys Jones writes).

In the final, he rarely allowed Richard Corsie a sight of the jack on his way to an unexpectedly easy 7-0, 7-3, 7-4 victory.

Earlier, Corsie defeated the reigning world champion, Hugh Duff, 7-2, 4-7, 7-5, in a best of three sets semi-final.

On his way to the final, Corsie showed the sort of form that took him to the world indoor singles title three times between 1989 and 1993, but he simply could not cope with Price's remorseless drawing to the jack.

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David Powell finds leading athletes taking up university places

Bath establishes elite role in sport

ASK Jacqui Agyepong where she is based and she answers "four or five different places". One place for sprints training, one for hurdles work, another for weight sessions and an hour up the road when she needs physiotherapy. It will all seem strange next month when everything she needs will be in one spot.

Agyepong, the 1994 Commonwealth Games 100 metres hurdles silver medal-winner, is one of four athletes who have agreed to form part of the new elite athletics programme at Bath University, launched yesterday. No longer will she face treks from London to Birmingham for technical coaching. She is moving to Bath to base herself at the university's £6 million "sports training village".

Colin Jackson, the 110 metres hurdles world record-holder, and two young athletes with the most difficult roles among active British athletes, Allison Curbishley and Ian Mackie, are also on board. Curbishley, a fine 400 metres hurdles prospect, is seeking to fill the gap left by Sally Gunnell's retirement. Mackie is Christie's successor as Great Britain's No 1 senior 100 metres runner.

Jackson is selling his home in South Wales to move to Bath, tempted by the chance to be reunited permanently with Malcolm Arnold, the coach who steered him to his greatest triumphs. Arnold, after four years as the Great Britain head coach, has vacated that role to take charge of the programme at Bath.

For two years, while both men were pulled in other directions — Arnold working for the British Athletic Federation and his athlete towards the management business he ran with Christie — Jackson's form deteriorated. Last summer, Jackson went back to Arnold for closer attention and won a silver medal at the world championships in Athens. Now the knot is to be pulled tighter.

Bath has provided the rope. Already, its elite swimming programme is reaping rewards. The university is home to six Olympic swimmers, among them Paul Palmer, the 400 metres freestyle silver medal-winner in Atlanta. From training in a 25-metre school pool in Lincolnshire, at hours to suit the school, he now has everything he needs when he needs it.

The university offers, according to Ged Roddy, its director of sport, "good facilities and the right support services in a compact, multisport environment". Six sports have been embraced at elite level, or will be — tennis, swimming, rugby union, cricket, athletics and hockey.

"Where we differ from other universities is that we provide coaching for full-time squads," Roddy said. Beneath the top tier is the scholarship programme, which used to be the pinnacle. The first thing that greets arrivals at the village is a notice: "Sydney 2000. Will you be there?"

The facilities, built and developed since 1992, have been financed by the National Lottery, university and city council. It is proposed to build an indoor training arena, for Arnold to head a team of coaches and for the number of elite athletes to be increased to 12. Arnold's role will include developing coaches. Roddy emphasised the importance of full-time coaches for sport at universities. "We tend to employ lecturers that will do sport part-time," he said.

Why should a university concern itself with elite athletes? Three good reasons, according to Roddy. Athletes on scholarships, such as Tatum Nelson, Britain's top-ranked teenage woman sprinter, will benefit from the presence of high-achievers. "With Colin here, she can see what she has to aspire to," Roddy said.

Then there is the opportunity for the university's sports scientists to conduct research working with leading athletes. Furthermore, the presence of leading athletes is likely, according to Roddy, to attract "quality students" to the university.

Blue's value measured in gold

BRYANT'S EYE

The University contests derive their special appeal from the one-off chance to win a Blue

The toughest and often the greatest days in sport are those when there is no tomorrow. The sprinter kneeling in the blocks, head bowed, at the start of an Olympic final; the penalty taker outstaring a goalkeeper in a World Cup shoot-out — these competitors, and the world watching them, know that this is their one shot at glory. There can be no replays, no second chances.

The drama of such unforgiving showdowns goes a long way to explain the mysterious attraction of the Varsity match at Twickenham this week. How baffling it may seem that a couple of student sides can pull in a crowd of 70,000, when even top club outfits in this professional era would be happy to play in front of a crowd a tenth of that size.

Yet the once-a-year shows, such as the Varsity match and the Boat Race, have enduring appeal because everyone understands and enjoys the simplicity of a one-off contest. It is this, along with a number of quaint traditions, that makes them unique — and can fill Twickenham, or have hundreds on the towpath suddenly becoming supporters of light or dark blue.

The traditions can be surprisingly cruel. The rower, John Woodhouse, for instance, must go down in Boat Race history as one of the unluckiest men to miss a Blue. He was the Cambridge stroke in 1979 and had trained for months for the race. He was hit by a stomach bug at the last minute and was only ruled out of the boat after an experimental two-minute start on the Saturday morning. His year of sacrifice counted for nothing — no seat in the boat inevitably meant no Blue.

But tradition is tradition, so it was both puzzling and sad to see one harmless custom kicked aside this year at Twickenham. For the first time the Rugby Football Union insisted that the line be run by professional referees. Traditionally the two captains from the previous year ran the line, all blazered and scarfed up, their shorts ridiculously short.

It had worked without problems for a century or so. Though when the Varsity match began they did not bother with referees at all. That, though, was in the far off days of 20 a side, when games were played at places such as Blackheath, the Oval and Queen's Club.

Despite the lack of their usual line judges, the teams produced a surprisingly spirited performance at Twickenham, when there was danger of a terrible anticlimax on a pitch still warm from the battle between England and New Zealand.

Student sport today finds itself in a strange position. All the talk is of professionalism and yet, somehow, it has managed to carve out a niche in the crazily overcrowded sporting calendar by clinging to its best amateur traditions.

Rugby and rowing are two of the 14 sports that award full Blue status for the showdown contests between the two universities. Their annual matches give a great focus of interest to those at the universities who single-mindedly prepare for one event above all others.

So it came as a surprise to witness another attack on the traditions of the Blues system after the Varsity cross-country match last Saturday.

This fixture, too, has its roots deep in the mud of history. It was the 107th in the series last weekend. Cambridge won it, beating Oxford by 31 points to 48. At the party after the race the newly awarded Light Blues were understandably triumphant.

The defeated Oxford captain, Chris Maxwell, of Worcester College, known affectionately to his squad as "the boss", was apparently not so pleased by his team's performance or by the system of awarding Blues.

> 'In their sport there can be no tomorrow'

He declared that he would award only "conditional Blues", and that in order to convert these notional awards into the real thing, his runners would have to turn out and do it all again in a further series of fixtures. "The season," he said, "is only half over. There are other races coming up. We shall have other opportunities to win."

He should have tried telling that to the Dark Blues as they left the pitch at Twickenham on Tuesday, or to any losing crew with their heads down at Mortlake after the Boat Race.

The concept of the "conditional Blue" is, of course, rubbish. The very essence of the Blue is the fact that it can be awarded on only one occasion. You can be the best in the world, but if you go down with flu or a twisted ankle on the eve of the match against the rival university, then forget it.

People have long sneered at student sport and the Varsity match and the Boat Race have often been written off as anacronistic oddities, but somehow, after a century and a half, and despite the advent of television and professionalism, they survive.

They do so because there is nothing "conditional" about the commitment of students who focus their sporting endeavours on the the climax of one fiercely fought event a year. If you remove this, such student sport will become a minor curiousity of no more than passing interest to anyone beyond the college corridors.

The secret of these student sportsmen's appeal is that, although they may step into their match trailing centuries of history, they know that they have just one day on which to make their own.

It is tough, but in their sport, there can be no tomorrow.

JOHN BRYANT

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 46

PAULINA

(b) Antigonus' wife in *The Winter's Tale*. She is proud, noble-hearted, forthright and impulsive. Alone of all Leontes' courtiers, she tells him exactly what she thinks of his behaviour.

TRINCULO

(a) Alonso's jester, made lugubrious by drink in *The Tempest*. He spends his time with Caliban and Stephano, plotting to instal Stephano in Prospero's place. For most of the time his wits are soused in sack, but he has occasional flashes of insightful asperity, to remind us of his true calling. "The folly of this island! They say there's but five upon this isle. We are three of them. If th'other two be brained like us, the state totters."

BELARIUS

(a) Loyal Lord banished by *Cymbeline* 20 years before the play begins, and now living in the Welsh woods under the name of Morgan. He is grizzled, brave and honest, a worthy foster-father to Guiderius and Arviragus.

FLORIZEL

(b) In *The Winter's Tale*, the handsome young prince who falls in love with Perdita and elopes with her after his father Polixenes forbids the match. He is like the principal boy in pantomime, and the chief feature of his role is the ringing, heroic rhetoric he has to speak.

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TELEVISION CHOICE

A ministerial cover-up?

Dispatches
Channel 4, 9.00pm

A disquieting report about "mad cow" disease (BSE) claims that much more was known about the possible dangers than the public has been led to believe. The chief villain is the Ministry of Agriculture, which has been criticised for putting farming interests before public health. According to a former government scientist, the ministry censored early research findings which suggested BSE could be a risk to humans. The programme also says that public funding was withheld from research which could have highlighted the risk of BSE in sheep much earlier. Professor John Collinge, who demonstrated the link between BSE and the new variant Creutzfelt-Jakob disease, which affects humans, thinks there should be a public inquiry.

Scare Stories: Going Overboard
BBC2, 9.25pm

The latest green debate to feature in this impressive series is about the dumping of waste at sea. For centuries this went on unchallenged, whether it was human sewage or, more recently, high-tech nuclear waste. And then came Greenpeace with a campaign that seized the moral high ground and successfully took on governments and industry. But the programme asks whether moral fervour is necessarily good science. The case for dumping is persuasively put by a marine scientist, Martin Angel. He accuses Greenpeace of being driven by emotion and says there is no evidence that waste dumped in the deep ocean, as opposed to shallow coastal waters, has any significant environmental impact. But the Brent Spar affair showed how far the pro-dumping lobby has been thrown on the defensive, even though Greenpeace's facts were skewed.

John Gummer and daughter (C4, 9pm)

Pommies
Channel 4, 10.00pm

The final film about Britons in Australia features three people who found life at home too restricting and have enjoyed the freedom of their adopted country. For Pat Lowe it was a long step from the convent education in Bournemouth to spending three years in the desert with an Aboriginal family, but it suited her adventurous spirit. Jenny Dell took rebellion a stage further. Expelled from Roedean, she later emigrated with her husband and young family and lived in a hippy haven. She is a suburban housewife now but glad she went through her "life-enhancing experience". After an unhappy English childhood, Stephen Murray came out to Australia to prove himself. After several abortive jobs he runs a private detective agency in Melbourne. We follow him on a case, tailing a woman suspected of being unfaithful.

The Shooting Gallery
Channel 4, midnight

Devotees of the short film are in a for a treat as Channel 4 mounts its periodic selection, to be shown in clutches over the next eight weeks. The unsocial hour of transmission means that most interested viewers will probably resort to the video recorder, though given that some films will be of more interest than others, use of the fast forward could be welcome. The evenings are themed and we start with a collection of nine films under the umbrella title of *Dangerous Games* in which drugs and crime loom large. Matt Winn's *Coming Down*, which has been acclaimed as the E (for Ecstasy) film for the 1990s, gets the season off to a forceful start with its unflinching study of five twentysomething clubbers unwinding after a night of excess. Do not expect either narrative polish or polite language. **Peter Waymark**

RADIO CHOICE

Ray Bradbury's Tales of the Bizarre
Radio 4, 11.00pm

There is an increasing trend in both radio and, especially, television for writers to have their names associated with things that they have not written, but this series has at least involved works originally written by Bradbury even if someone else has done the radio adaptations. Bradbury will always be renowned for the huge works of science fiction which brought him fame and film fortune, including *Fahrenheit 451* and *The Martian Chronicles*, but his short stories (the basis of this series) are tales of equal skill and tension, often with at least a touch of the macabre. Tonight's story, *The Wind*, concerns plans for a dinner party thrown off course by a telephone call from a friend that might well have been better ignored.

Paul Jones
Radio 2, 8.00pm

Radio 2 has had a lot of mileage out of programmes about record labels and most of it has been worthwhile travelling for the listener, because labels tend to be ignored until someone decides they may be worthy of investigation. How, for example, did Chess, the subject of tonight's programme, get its name? The question could draw all sorts of exotic answers but the prosaic truth is that two brothers called Leonard and Phil Chess started the label in 1950. Their aim was to give a push to Chicago electric blues music and the result was not only that Chicago musicians came to fame but many from the south moved north to join the label, whose artists have included Howlin' Wolf and Chuck Berry. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening and Zoë Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Jo Whiley. Includes **12.30pm** Newsbeat **2.00** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Dave Pearce **6.15** *Newsbeat* **6.30** *Evening Session* **8.30** Movie Update with Mark Kermode **8.40** Blur in Brixton. The band live in concert **10.30** Mary Anne Hobbs **12.00** Blue Jam **1.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Chris Moyles

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **11.30** Jimmy Young **1.30pm** Debbie Thrower **3.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** John Dunn **7.00** David Allen's Country Club **8.00** Paul Jones. See Choice **9.00** Smokey Robinson's Soul Selection **9.30** *Russ Abbot Show* **10.00** *Comedy Quiz* **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.05am** Steve Madden **3.00** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** Midday with Mair **2.00pm** Ruscoe on Five **4.00** Nationwide with Julian Worricker **7.00** News Extra **7.30** Football on the Brink **8.00** Inside Edge with Rob Bonnet and the team **9.00** SportsAmerica with Alton Byrd **9.30** Sportshop **10.00** News Talk **11.00** News Extra **12.00** After Hours **2.00am** Up All Night **5.00** Morning Reports

VIRGIN RADIO

5.00am Jeremy Clark **7.00** Chris Evans **10.00 (FM)** Robin Banks **(AM)** Graham Dene **1.00pm (FM)** Nick Abbot **(MW)** Nicky Horne **4.00** Russ 'n' Jono **7.00 (FM)** Paul Coyte **(AM)** Cairnin Jones **10.00** Mark Forrest **2.00am** Richard Porter

TALK RADIO

6.30am Paul Ross and Carol McGiffen **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Lorraine Kelly **2.00pm** Tommy Boyd **4.00** Peter Deeley **7.00** Anna Raeburn **9.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsday **6.30** Meridian Books **7.00** News **7.15** Off the Shelf: The Grass Is Singing **7.30** Composer of the Month **8.00** *News* **8.10** *Pause for Thought* **8.15** *Performance* **8.30** *The Ed Stewart Show* **9.00** News; News in German (648 only) **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Poems by Post **9.30** BBC English: Business File **9.45** Sports Roundup **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Discovery **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Children in Conversation **11.45** From Our Own Correspondent **12.00** News **12.05pm** World Business Report **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Record News **12.45** Sports Roundup **1.00** Newshour **2.00** News **2.05** Outlook **2.30** Multitrack X-Press **3.00** News; News in German (648 only) **3.05** Sports Roundup **3.15** Westway **3.30** The Vintage Chart Show **4.00** News **4.15** Record News **4.30** The World Today; News in German (648 only) **4.45** Britain Today **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Roundup **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Assignment; News in German (648 only) **7.00** News Summary **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Pause for Thought **7.30** John Peel **8.00** Newshour **9.00** News **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** Meridian Books **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** The World Today **10.45** Sports Roundup **11.00** News **11.05** Outlook **11.30** John Peel **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30am** Westway **12.45** Britain Today **1.00** Newsdesk **1.30** Composer of the Week **2.00** Newsday **2.30** Focus on Faith **3.00** News **3.05** World Business Report **3.15** Sports Roundup **3.30** Assignment **4.00** Newsdesk **4.30** Europe Today **5.00** *Newsday* **5.30** *Europe Today*

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey **9.00** Henry Kelly. *Michael Barry's Classic Recipe is smoked haddock mousse. Plus, the Classic Masterpiece* **1.00pm** Listener Request Hour. *Presented by Jane Jones* **2.00** Concerto. Vivaldi (Violin Concerto No 8 in A minor for two violins and strings; Concerto No 11 in D minor for two violins, cello and strings) **3.00** Jamie Crick **6.30** Newsnight **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven with John Brunning **8.00** *Evening Concert*. Vaughan-Williams (Flos Campi); Barber (Agnus Dei for chorus and organ); Mozart (Clarinet Quintet in A major); Rheinberger (Mass in E flat, Cantus Missae) **10.00** Michael Mappin **2.00am** Concerto (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Stephanie Hughes. Includes Vivaldi (Concerto in G for Two Mandolins); Sarasate (Carmen Fantasy); Canteloube (Baïlero, from Songs of the Auvergne); Haydn (String Quartet *in D minor*); *Poulenc (Capriccio, Bal Masque)*; Copland (Four Dance Episodes, Rodeo)

9.00 Morning Collection, with Peter Hobday. Telemann (Viola Concerto in G); Schumann (Piano Trio No 3 in G minor)

10.00 Musical Encounters. Live from the Concert Hall, New Broadcasting House, Manchester, with Mark Rowlinson. Includes Rachmaninov (Blessed Be the Lord, Vespers); Liadov (The Enchanted Lake, Kikimora); Schubert (Standchen); Wagner (Siegfried's Funeral March)

12.00 Composer of the Week: Goehr

1.00pm The Operatic Year. *Michael Oliver, Hugh Canning and Andrew Clements discuss some of the outstanding new CD opera issues of the year.* Includes a recording made at the Mariinsky Teatre in St Petersburg with Valery Gergiev conducting the Chorus and Orchestra of the Kirov Opera. Plus Verdi's *La forza del Destino* featuring Galina Gorchakova and Gegam Gregorian, and in Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Maid of Pskov*, Gorchakova is joined by Ludmilla Filatova and Vladimir Ognovienko

2.00 The BBC Orchestras. BBC National Orchestra of Wales, *under Grant Llewellyn and Tadaaki Otaka*, with Margaret Price, soprano. Mozart (Symphony No 41 in C, Jupiter); Strauss (Freundliche Vision; Ständchen; *Morgen*; Heimliche Aufforderung; Ruhe, Meine Seele; Cecilie); Walton (Symphony No 1)

4.00 Ensemble. Penny Gore presents the second of two recitals by Janet Hilton, clarinet, and Ronan *O'Hora, piano, of music by Weber and* Mendelssohn (r)

4.45 Music Machine, with Tommy Pearson

5.00 In Tune, with Sean Rafferty

7.25 Performance on 3: Paul Bunyan. (Sounding the Century). A new production of Britten's opera, live from the Shaftesbury Theatre, London. With Susan Gritton, soprano, Pamela Helen Stephen, *mezzo*, Leah-Marian Jones, *mezzo*, Royal Opera Chorus, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House under Richard Hickox. Act 1 **8.30** Britten and Pears in the US **8.50** Paul Bunyan, Act 2

***10.00* Postscript: Young Screenwriters.** Christopher Cook talks to Andrew Bergman, writer of *Blazing Saddles, Fletch* and *Striptease* (3/4)

10.25 From Russia with Wagner. The Russian State Academic Orchestra under Valery Gergiev performs a selection of orchestral music from Wagner's operas, including the prelude to Act 3 of *Lohengrin*

10.45 Night Waves. Patrick Wright discusses reactions to this week's opening of the Getty Centre in LA and debates the international influence of Getty family money and taste on art collections around the world

11.30 Composer of the Week: Cole Porter (r)

12.30am Jazz Notes, with Richard Niles

1.00 Through the Night, with Donald Macleod

RADIO 4

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing **6.10** Farming Today **6.25** Prayer for the Day **6.30** Today **8.40** Yesterday in Parliament **8.58** Weather

9.00 News 9.05 The Moral Maze. *Michael Buerk* chairs a live investigation into the moral questions behind the week's news

10.00 (FM) News; Radio Times Past. A light-hearted look at popular broadcasting by Mike Barfield

10.00 (LW) Daily Service. From Ely Cathedral

10.15 (LW) On This Day, with Geoffrey Wheeler

10.30 Woman's Hour. Introduced by Jenni Murray

11.30 From Our Own Correspondent. Dispatches from BBC reporters around the world

12.00 News; You and Yours, with Mark Whitaker

12.25pm Inspiration. The panel game in which inventions and discoveries are subjected to *quizzical investigation,* from the the Science Museum **12.55** Weather

1.00 The World at One, with Nick Clarke

1.40 The Archers (r) **1.55** Shipping Forecast

2.00 News; Thursday Afternoon Play: Finding Fellows, by Nick Fisher. A computer expert surfs the internet for contacts, concealing his identity. With Nicholas Woodeson, Sarah Rice, David Brooks and Christopher Wright

3.00 News; Afternoon Shift, with Daire Brehan

4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Paul Allen sees a new production of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*

4.45 Short Story: Conversations with Unicorns, by Peter Carey, read by Jonathan Keeble

5.00 PM, with Charlie Lee-Potter and Chris Lowe **5.50** Shipping Forecast **5.55** Weather

6.00 Six O'Clock News

6.30 On the Town with the League of Gentlemen. A black comedy written by and starring Steve Pemberton, Reece Shearsmith, Mark Gatiss and *Jeremy Dyson*

7.00 News 7.05 The Archers

7.20 Soundtrack. A Sony Award-nominated audio diary recorded by the mother of a seven-year-old girl taken into hospital with a brain tumour (1/6) (r)

8.00 Analysis: The Best for the Brightest? Frances Cairncross investigates Oxford and Cambridge Universities' campaign for more generous funding than other colleges, and the argument that it is worth paying more for excellence

8.45 Letter from Scotland. Tom Morton reflects on life from his home in Shetland (2/3)

9.00 Does He Take Sugar? With Frederick Dove

9.30 Kaleidoscope (r) **9.59** Weather

10.00 The World Tonight, with Robin Lustig

10.45 Book at Bedtime: Candide. Anton Lesser reads Voltaire's classic satire (4/8)

11.00 Ray Bradbury's Tales of the Bizarre: The Wind. Dramatised by Brian Sibley. See Choice (4/6)

11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament. A roundup of the day's news from Westminster

11.30 (FM) Utopia and Other Destinations. *Nawal El Saadawi shares her vision of an ideal world with* Michael O' Donnell (2/6) (r)

12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Metroland. Written and read by Julian Barnes (9/10) (r)

12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.

Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

[illegible]

هكذا من الإهمل

Those funny, familiar, forgotten feelings

REVIEW

Joe Joseph

Looking back on it now, it is hard to remember just how fiery a scandal the Guinness affair was. But only, of course, if you're Ernest Saunders. For the rest of us who have never suffered a now-you-forget-it-now-you-don't bout of Alzheimer's, Guinness's takeover of Distillers was a fascinating glimpse into what probably goes on in the City most days, but rarely comes to light.

But the takeover wasn't what Philippa Walker wanted to focus on in **Guinnessty**, her film for BBC2's *Modern Times*. And although we were told that the Guinness family now owns only 2 per cent of the company, Walker wasn't setting out to chart the dynasty's waning City muscle either (in fact, the family did very well, financially, out of Saunders's reign as chief executive).

As for the narrator's conclusion, after he had regaled us with the many tragedies that had befallen the Guinness family, that: "Few families have been handed down a legacy to match the first Earl of Iveagh's. It ensured that all his heirs would enjoy extremely comfortable lives. But easy living meant that few strove to equal their illustrious ancestor. Extreme wealth, it seems, has its own drawbacks!" Well, crikey, you'd have to be pretty deep in your cups to think that that even amounted to an original thought, let alone a revelatory documentary proposal.

What we actually got was a jigsaw of interviews that Walker had extracted neatly from normally reclusive people — including a chat with Ernest "The Amazing Memory Man" Saunders. The interviews spoke eloquently enough for themselves, reminding us that Tolstoy wasn't altogether right when he said that all happy families resemble each other, while each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. The things that blighted the happiness of generation after generation of Guinnesses were pretty much the same things as blight other, poorer families: drink, drugs, death, divorce, deceit, disloyalty, and depression; though maybe not quite so much in the way of debt.

Although descended from an alleged sheep-rustler, the Guinnesses, once rich, didn't take all that long to develop a sense of "us" rather than of "them". Here was Maureen Guinness, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, doyenne of the family and friend of the Queen Mother, recounting how the little people who had organised her recent 90th birthday party at Claridge's hadn't grasped who it was they were dealing with: "We asked too many people, because we had somebody who was helping us who didn't sort of realise that one had always given very good parties so that people jolly well came, knowing that there were going to be, you know... and people kept sort of saying, well half the people won't come, don't worry, and of course, they all did!" Maureen never once doubted that they would: you see, nobody ever spurned a Guinness invitation.

The art dealer Kasmin recalled how Sheridan, Maureen's son, "had four cars when I met him as an undergraduate. He had two Porsches, a Jaguar saloon and a Mini Cooper. He quite frequently would park the Porsche in a hurry, leaving the keys in it to do something, and come out and find it gone. He'd say 'You see? That's why you need two'."

Then there was Desmond Guinness — Maureen's cousin; brother of the former Monday Club chairman Jonathan and son of Diana Mitford, who first married Brian Guinness, and later Sir Oswald Mosley — leafing through the family album. "Oh dear! Hitler!" smiled Desmond, like a schoolboy with a *Playboy*, as the album fell open at a page. "Whoops! Keep getting Adolf," he giggled as the Führer's face peered out from another page. And another. "He keeps cropping up." We all know that feeling, Des.

But even "the little people" have their place. Especially little as in jockeys. Racing is one of the few worlds where "us" and "them" mix regularly and eagerly. Maureen probably loved Lester Piggott when he was in the saddle. Her nephew, Gay Kindersley, *was* a jockey for a while. And last night's **Secret Lives** (Channel 4) reminded us that Piggott's life had just as many ups and downs as that of any Guinness, culminating in a spell behind bars for tax fraud.

Piggott was ruthless, miserly ("He got his pleasure out of cheating somebody out of sixpence," said Willy Carson) and always on one secretive scam or another. His strange, mumbling, barely comprehensible voice seems tailor-made for furtive conversations.

Apart from grateful Derby-Day punters, Piggott wasn't much liked: certainly not by fellow-jockeys, nor by trainers, not even by owners for whom he won races. But then he was always more interested in cash than camaraderie. *Secret Lives* was an entertaining gallop across Piggott's reputation, even though it contained few real secrets. Except the one about Piggott being "Britain's greatest sportsman": now that really *was* a revelation.

Actually, Piggott seems to have a lot in common with the leopard, David Attenborough's latest subject in **The Wildlife Specials** (BBC1). They are fast, aggressive, predatory and solitary by nature. By using special new cameras that operate without any visible light, Owen Newman and Amanda Barrett enabled us to see for the first time leopards hunting at night, their shoulderblades rising and falling slowly like bobbing corks as they inch towards their prey. *The Wildlife Specials* are proving to be a rarity on television: a series that consistently lives up to its promise to tell us something really new about familiar subjects.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (28053)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (75140)
9.00 Good Living (1290546)
9.25 Style Challenge (1279053)
9.50 Kilroy (T) (2917343)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook(T) (1794508)
10.55 The Really Useful Show (T) (8786782)
11.35 Change That (3902633)
12.00 News (T) and weather (9426140)
12.05pm Call My Bluff (2637633)
12.35 Give Us A Clue (5300121)
1.00 News (T) and weather (85527)
1.30 Regional News (17479362)
1.40 The Weather Show (86373121)
1.45 Neighbours Lisa is convinced she's seriously ill (T) (73283576)
2.10 Petrocelli (r) (1088966)
3.00 Vets' School (r) (3879)
3.30 Playdays (7736430) **3.50** Noddy (9801430) **3.55** The Silver Brumby (7746817) **4.20** Mr Wymi (7750614) **4.35** Smart (2625256) **5.00** Newsround (T) (2183891) **5.10** Aquila (T) (6332879)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (522237)
6.00 News (T) and weather (546)
6.30 Regional News (898)
7.00 Watchdog with Anne Robinson Consumer magazine (T) (8188)
7.30 EastEnders Peggy is fed up with George's constant interfering and decides to let him know who's boss (T) (782)
8.00 Animal Hospital Rolf Harris sees vet Helen Kemp perform a risky operation to remove an abscess from her own much-loved pet rabbit's cheek (T) (4508)
8.30 Holiday Reps Helen discovers it's not all fun in the sun when a family learn their son has died back in the UK (T) (6343)
9.00 News (T) and weather (2985)
9.30 Men Behaving Badly: Sofa Gary realises it's high time he got rid of his moth-eaten, flea-ridden, beer-soaked sofa of 25 years — leading to a nostalgic trip down memory lane revealing his youth, his first day at work and his meeting with Dorothy. Last in series (T) (13459)
10.00 They Think It's All Over Chris Eubank joins team captains David Gower and Gary Lineker for another round of the light-hearted sports quiz (T) (67782)
10.30 Clive Anderson All Talk With Julie Walters and Ian Botham (76430)
11.00 Question Time Political discussion from Cardiff with a panel including Welsh Secretary Ron Davies, the Conservative spokesman on constitutional affairs, Michael Ancram, Dafydd Wigley, the President of Plaid Cymru, and Nigella Lawson, a columnist on *The Times*. Chaired by David Dimbleby (T) (663546)
12.05am The Last Best Year (1990) with Bernadette Peters as a high-flying businesswoman who falls victim to terminal cancer, but learns to cope with life thanks to sympathetic psychologist Mary Tyler Moore. Directed by John Erman (T) (5285270)
1.35 Weather (7333589)
1.40 BBC News 24

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes
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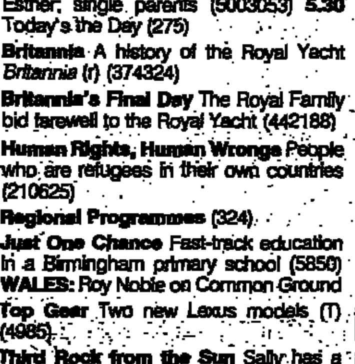
BBC2

6.00am Science: Mapping the Milky Way (72362) **6.30** Accumulating Years and Wisdom (55898) **7.00** See Hear Breakfast News (3202430) **7.15** Teletubbies (r) (2499430) **7.40** Penelope Pitstop (r) (8859091) **8.05** Blue Peter (r) (T) (6051508) **8.30** Mouse and Mole (2024411) **8.35** Johnson and Friends (9064879) **8.45** The Record (8566528) **9.10** The Fugitive (r) (T) (1859430) **10.00** Teletubbies (39850)
10.30 A Place in the Sun (1951) Social climber Montgomery Clift is offered the chance of marrying rich girl Elizabeth Taylor. Directed by George Stevens (35324)
12.30pm Working Lunch (91237) **1.00** Joshua Jones (50574850) **1.10** The History Hour: Blackpool's tram system; a military archive (2460782) **2.10** Going, Going, Gone (84643879) **2.40** News (T) (7899898) **2.45** Westminster (T) (5939527) **3.25** News (T) (5060166) **3.30** The Village (r) (904)
4.00 Ready Steady Cook (411) **4.30** Through the Keyhole (2624527) **4.55** Esther: single parents (5003053) **5.30** Today's the Day (275)
6.00 Britannia A history of the Royal Yacht *Britannia* (r) (374324)
6.50 Britannia's Final Day The Royal Family bid farewell to the Royal Yacht (442188)
7.20 Human Rights, Human Wrongs People who are refugees in their own countries (210625)
7.30 Regional Programmes (324)
8.00 Just One Chance Fast-track education in a Birmingham primary school (5850) **WALES:** Roy Noble on Common Ground
8.30 Top Gear Two new Lexus models (T) (4985)
9.00 Third Rock from the Sun Sally has a heated argument with *Star Wars'* Mark Hamill (T) (769508)

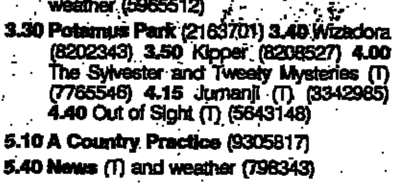


Marie and Jim Bohlen (9.25pm)

9.25 Scare Stories The world's oceans have been a dumping ground for toxic waste — until 25 years ago, when the fledgling Greenpeace called for a stop to the practice (T) (759053)
10.15 Human Rights, Human Wrongs (r) (131121)
10.25 Video Nation Shorts (670695)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (893817)
11.15 Late Review The week's cultural highlights (128275)
11.55 Weather (520672)
12.00 The Midnight Hour (89928)
12.30am Learning Zone: Russell Grant (8064947) **12.35** 20th Century History (6561270) **1.00** Lifestyles, Work and the Family (64367) **2.00** Art and Craft of Movie Making (32831) **4.00** Teaching Film and Media (92473) **5.00** Teaching and Learning with IT (43947)

HTV

6.00am GMTV (2785904)
9.25 Supermarket Sweep (T) (1288701)
9.55 Regional News and weather (7031343)
10.00 The Time, the Place (66904)
10.30 This Morning (T) (97523633)
12.20pm Regional News (9422324)
12.30 News (T) and weather (5336546)
12.55 Shortland Street (5311237)
1.25 Home and Away Marilyn cries for her lost baby (T) (73657898)
1.50 Quisine (T) (60138607) **2.20** Countdown to Christmas (T) (45194782) **2.50** Vanessa (T) (4041633) **3.20** News (4515071) **3.25** Regional News and weather (5965512)
3.30 Potamus Park (2163701) **3.40** Wizadora (8202343) **3.50** Kipper (8208527) **4.00** The Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries (T) (7765546) **4.15** Jumanji (T) (3342985) **4.40** Out of Sight (T) (5643148)
5.10 A Country Practice (9305817)
5.40 News (T) and weather (798343)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (532140)
6.25 Regional Weather (418121)
6.30 Regional News (T) (966)
7.00 Emmerdale The Dingles think they can make some money out of the fortune telling tramp (T) (3256)
7.30 WALES: Wales This Week (850)
7.30 The Big Story (850)
8.00 The Bill Deakin and Rawton investigate an assault on a good looking charmer who has been cheating middle-aged women out of their savings (T) (2904)



Jenny Wood and Scooby (8.30pm)

8.30 Dover A French industrial dispute brings chaos to Dover, as the M20 is turned into a truck stop (T) (1411)
9.00 Thief Takers: Black Mist The squad find themselves up against two of the world's most formidable gangster organisations (T) (4695)
10.00 News at Ten (T) and weather (52850)
10.30 Regional News (503985)
10.40 James Bond: Shaken and Stirred Celebrity Bond fans take a look at 007 as he makes his latest film appearance in *Tomorrow Never Dies* (368546)
11.40 WALES: The Big Story (277275)
11.40 Tropical Heat (264324)
12.15am WALES: Short Story Cinema: Birch St Gym (r) (73909)
12.45am The LADS (65980)
1.15 Funny Business (4663218)
1.40 The Loop (r) (5935589)
2.10 Planet Rock Profiles (8915102)
2.40 Late and Loud (r) (5951980)
3.35 The Good Sex Guide Late (r) (5919283)
4.35 Beyond Reason (79110980)
5.00 The Pulse (r) (T) (15560)
5.30 News (77183)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (5311237)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9305817)
6.25 Central News (557459)
6.55-7.00 Lifeline (403459)
10.40 Crime Stalker (368546)
11.40 James Bond: Shaken and Stirred (264324)
12.45am Funny Business (65980)
1.15 Planet Mirth (4663218)
1.40 Rockmania (6383102)
2.40 God's Gift (5951980)
3.35 Central Jobfinder '97 (100096)
5.20 Asian Eye (4526541)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.55 Home and Away (7420527)
1.20-1.50 Emmerdale (62781940)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (9305817)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (96782)
11.40 Laugh with the Carry Ons (737140)
12.10am Campus Cops (9522560)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:
1.50pm The Fashion Police (60138607)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (9305817)
6.00 Meridian Tonight (614)
6.30-7.00 Rural Rides (966)
11.40 In Suspicious Circumstances (264324)
5.00am Freescreen (15560)

ANGLIA

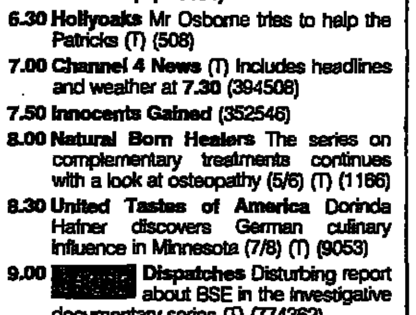
As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 The Fashion Police (5311237)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9305817)
6.25 Anglia News (557459)
6.55-7.00 What's On (403459)
11.40 Bryan Adams: Waking Up the World (264324)

S4C

Starts: 7.00am The Big Breakfast (68850)
9.00 Something So Right (79527)
9.30 Film: Thin Ice (3851850)
10.55 The Web (8894492)
11.00 The Trouble with Kids (5459)
11.30 Powerhouse (6188)
12.00 Sesame Street (82091)
12.30pm Ricki Lake (19633)
1.00 Slot Meithrin (50590898)
1.15 Wil Cwac Cwac (50588053)
1.30 Gardens without Borders (17453324)
1.45 Film: Sink the Bismarck! (91640411)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (512)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (879)
4.30 Movers and Shakers (661)
5.00 5 Pump (4362)
5.30 Countdown (343)
6.00 Newyddion (905072)
6.10 Heno (398904)
7.00 Pobol y Cwm (660817)
7.25 Penblwydd Hapus (928614)
8.00 Os Byw Ac Iach (1166)
8.30 Newyddion (9053)
9.00 Heliwr (5188)
11.00 Pommies (88614)
12.00 Dispatches (1743454)
12.45am Innocents Lost (933096)
1.45-2.15 Natural Born Healers (92034)

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (44091) **7.00** The Big Breakfast (68850) **9.00** Something So Right (T) (79527)
9.30 Thin Ice (1937, b/w) A romantic comedy musical about a European prince who falls in love with a Swiss ice-skating coach. Starring Sonja Henie and Tyrone Power. Sidney Lanfield directs (3851850)
10.55 The Web Animated short about the falcon (8894492) **11.00** The Trouble with Kids. Parenting magazine (4/5) (5459) **11.30** Powerhouse (T) (6188) **12.00** Sesame Street (82091) **12.30pm** Light Lunch (12459)
1.30 Fishing the Sloe Black River A short about an elderly Co. Kerry couple (T) (17453324)
1.45 Jupiter's Darling (1955) starring Esther Williams, George Sanders and Howard Keel. A musical set in Roman times. Directed by George Sidney (T) (91640411)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (512) **4.00** Fifteen-to-One (T) (879) **4.30** Countdown (T) (2619695) **4.55** Ricki Lake (T) (5098121) **5.30** Pet Rescue (T) (343)
6.00 Boy Meets World Eric takes a job as a security guard (T) (530782)
6.25 Fresh Pop (449091)
6.30 Hollyoaks Mr Osborne tries to help the Patricks (T) (508)
7.00 Channel 4 News (T) Includes headlines and weather at **7.30** (394508)
7.50 Innocents Gained (352546)
8.00 Natural Born Healers The series on complementary treatments continues with a look at osteopathy (5/6) (T) (1166)
8.30 United Tastes of America Dorinda Hafner discovers German culinary influence in Minnesota (7/8) (T) (9053)
9.00 Dispatches Disturbing report about BSE in the investigative documentary series (T) (774362)
9.45 Lloyds Bank Film Challenge: St Clare A comedy about a latter-day miracle worker (T) (188879)



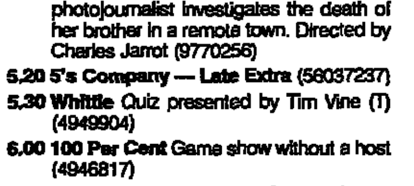
Pat Lowe in Australia (10.00pm)

10.00 Pommies Series on Britons who have made Australia their home (3/3) (T) (6659607)
11.05 Babylon 5 Marcus makes the ultimate sacrifice for Ivanova (T) (308324)
12.00 The Shooting Gallery Showcase for short films beginning with Coming Down (9531218) **12.35am** California Sunshine (6572386) **12.55** Fork in the Road (3579299) **1.25** Wired (4765096) **1.40** Pact (7778676) **1.50** *Piggy Bank* (2369473) **2.10** The Bloody Olive (3944102) **2.25** The Short Cut (2980096) **2.40** Drive Baby Drive (6646893)
2.55 Springhill (5987305) **3.50** Glasgow Kiss. Glasgow's lesbian and gay community (6671831) **4.45** EZ Street (6542102) **5.30** Schools: Backtracks (r) (6512015)

CHANNEL 5

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a **Videocrypt** decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are picture: **10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02** and **7.20 MHz**

6.00am 5 News Early (4483091)
7.30 Milkshake! (7763850)
7.35 Kablam! (9355343)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (1403017)
8.30 WideWorld Last in the documentary series about the Victorian era (2853558)
9.00 Espresso Consumer affairs magazine (7227343)
10.00 Exclusive (r) (4682782)
10.30 Instant Gardens (r) (2958102)
11.00 Leeza Chat show (3501904)
11.50 Double Espresso (90167275) **12.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (T) (8253594) **12.30pm** Family Affairs (r) (T) (1783140)
1.00 5 News Update (88025430) **1.05** Sunset Beach (T) (4376362) **2.00** 5's Company. Live entertainment show (3571140)
3.30 Harlequin: Treacherous Beauties (1994) starring Emma Sams and Catherine Oxenberg. A steamy tale of love, jealousy and murder when a photojournalist investigates the death of her brother in a remote town. Directed by Charles Jarrot (9770256)
5.20 5's Company — Late Extra (56037237)
5.30 Whittle Quiz presented by Tim Vine (T) (4949904)
6.00 100 Per Cent Game show without a host (4946817)
6.30 Family Affairs Annie and Chris make the most of an empty house (T) (4937169)
7.00 Exclusive Includes a report on whether taking off your clothes is a career boost (5398782)
7.30 Animal Outposts: Creatures of the Wind The wildlife of Argentina's Patagonian Desert (T) (4926053)
8.00 Was It Good for You? Holidays on the Côte D'Azur (5307430)
8.30 5 News (T) (5393237)



Martin and Hannah (9.00pm)

9.00 Roxanne (1987) Steve Martin and Darryl Hannah star in this updating of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, directed by Fred Schepisi (T) (8954256)
11.00 The Jack Docherty Show Comedy and chat (5105362)
11.45 Live and Dangerous Includes coverage of the top matches from the Brazilian National Football League (86556508)
4.35 am The Streets of San Francisco Police drama series starring Karl Malden (T) (5018305)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (7275980)

SATELLITE AND CABLE

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY 1

6.00am Morning Glory (814459) 9.00 Hotel (98324) 10.00 Another World (10237) 11.00 Days of Our Lives (23701) 12.00 Oprah Winfrey (50904) 1.00pm Geraldo (36324) 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (98527) 3.00 Jenny Jones (69188) 4.00 Oprah Winfrey (46695) 5.00 Star Trek: Voyager (8343) 6.00 The Live 6 Show (5558) 6.30 Married...with Children (4850) 7.00 The Simpsons (9072) 7.30 Real TV (3362) 8.00 Suddenly Susan (5492) 8.30 The Nanny (4527) 9.00 Seinfeld (44879) 9.30 Mad About You (51633) 10.00 ER (98188) 11.00 Star Trek: Voyager (11986) 12.00 Late Show with David Letterman (60034) 1.00am In the Heat of the Night (59639) 2.00 Long Play (6266034)

SKY BOX OFFICE

[illegible]

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 1

[illegible]

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 2

[illegible]

6.00 Munchie Strikes Back (1995) (54959085) 8.00 A Kiss So Deadly (1996) (95091) 10.00 Black Scorpion: Ground Zero (1996) (374898) 11.35 Red Shoe Diaries: The Game (1995) (190546) 12.55am Dream Man (1994) (829876) 2.30 Waxwork (1988) (846725) 4.10 Nightmare Alley (1947) (558744)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

4.00pm Irma La Douce (1963) (76670985) 6.20 Annie Oakley (1935) (81173343) 8.00 For a Few Dollars More (1965) (41626362) 10.10 The Boston Strangler (1968) (8414701) 12.05am School Daze (1988) (6880305) 2.05 The Mackintosh Man (1973) (6512066) 3.45 A Summer's Tale (1996) (4079386)

TNT

9.00pm Treasure Island (1990) (56293362) 11.30 The Prisoner of Zenda [illegible]

SKY SPORTS 1

[illegible]

SKY SPORTS 2

[illegible]

SKY SPORTS 3

[illegible]

EUROSPORT

[illegible]

UK GOLD

[illegible]

CARLTON SELECT (cable)

[illegible]

GRANADA PLUS

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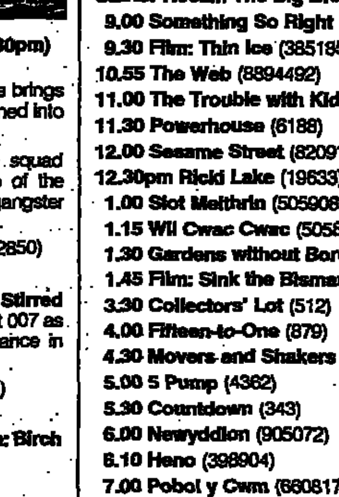

George Clooney as Dr Ross in *ER* (Sky One, 10.00pm)

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FOX KIDS NETWORK

[illegible]

TCC

[illegible]

DISNEY CHANNEL

[illegible]

CARTOON NETWORK

All your favourite cartoons broadcast from 5.00am to 9.00pm, seven days a week.

NICKELODEON

[illegible]

TROUBLE

[illegible]

CHALLENGE TV

[illegible]

BRAVO

[illegible]

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

[illegible]

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

[illegible]

HOME & LEISURE

[illegible]

DISCOVERY

[illegible]

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

[illegible]

TRAVEL (cable)

[illegible]

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

[illegible]

CARLTON FOOD (cable)

[illegible]

LIVING

[illegible]

ZEE TV

[illegible]

MTV

The 24 hour music channel

VH-1

The video hits channel

SPORTS BOOKS 44
Claridge's tales add zest to footballing year

SPORT

RACING 46
Industry uneasy in wake of Sheikh's threats

Player admitted taking drugs

Charlton sack Stuart after random test

By Russell Kempson

CHARLTON Athletic yesterday terminated the contract of Jamie Stuart, their former England Under-21 defender, 18 months before it was due to expire after he admitted taking marijuana and cocaine. Stuart is the fourth Charlton footballer to have tested positive for drugs, and the club now fears that it will always carry the stigma.

Future commercial deals at The Valley could have been put in jeopardy and many Charlton youth team players have already had to endure drug-related comments from spectators during matches. "Jamie's actions have cast a shadow of suspicion over the whole club," Alan Curbishley, the manager of the Nationwide League first division club, said yesterday. "The club and I believe there was no other decision to make."

Charlton officials have also invited the Football Association to see its drugs education programme, which includes regular discussion groups and visits from police representatives. "I don't believe we can do much more," Peter Varney, the managing director, said. "We've told the FA to come here, have a look and see if there's anything more we can do."

Stuart, 21, tested positive for cocaine, a stimulant, and marijuana, a prohibited substance, in a urine sample provided to the FA in a random test on November 17. He admitted last Friday to taking the drugs and is now certain to face a charge of misconduct from the FA.

"Two weeks ago, we received a firm inquiry for Jamie from another first division club," Varney said. "They confirmed that a substantial six-figure bid was to be made this week. In taking our decision to terminate his contract, we have demonstrated our determination to protect our good name whatever the cost."

In May 1994, Craig Sloan was treated for drug addiction after confessing to taking cocaine. He was subsequently released by Charlton. Lee Bowyer and Dean Chandler tested positive for cannabis and Jay Notley for a cocktail of cocaine, Ecstasy and cannabis. The three were suspended by the FA and no longer play for Charlton. Bowyer moved to Leeds United for £2.6 million in July last year.

"All the previous examples here have given out a harsh message," Varney said. "We could not have worked harder to educate our players, at all levels, about the evil of drugs, but I believe it is a social problem. It is something within the youth culture in this country."

Varney's son, Alex, 12, plays for the Charlton under-13 side. "Some of the blokes on the touchline are having a field day with us," Varney said. "You wouldn't believe what the kids are having to put up with. When they score a goal, people shout out: 'Have you tested him, ref?' The lads also get asked what they've been sniffing.

"It's not the image we want here. It's not about Charlton doing successfully in the first division, it's about syringes in the training ground. And the trouble is, mud sticks." With the club redeveloping its main stand, Varney is also concerned that sponsorship packages for the community, family and disabled sections may be lost. "No deals have been signed, yet if you were running a company and heard all this, what would you think?" he said.

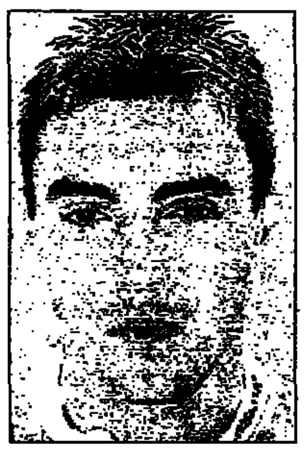
Stuart said: "I'm very sad. I shouldn't have got myself in this situation. All I want to do is get myself back in the professional game. I'm going to clean up my act because I want to play football. I need to play and I know that when this whole thing is done, I will be better and stronger than before.

"My team-mates have been very supportive and called to see how I was but, for a while, I'm going to be on my own. I'm going to train harder than ever and I can't sit at home feeling sorry for myself. I need to wipe the slate clean, get fitter than ever, believe in myself and get football to believe in me again."

Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, said last night that the association opposed the ending of contracts after drugs test failures.

"We do not want to encourage the sledgehammer approach," Taylor said. "We feel it is a dangerous precedent for other clubs to follow as we believe they should be looking to help rehabilitate players but, while we are very keen to do our best to stamp out drug-taking in football, we can understand Charlton's position on this matter.

"Because of the problems they have had in the past, they were concerned about their reputation and wanted to send a clear message to their own players and to the rest of football."



Stuart: faces FA charge

GRAHAM COX

Masterclass: Colin Jackson, Britain's world record-holder over 110 metres hurdles, welcomes Tatum Nelson, a highly promising young sprinter, to the new sports village for elite performers, which was formally opened at Bath University yesterday. Report, page 50

Milosevic finds much to smile about

By Russell Kempson

WHEN Savo Milosevic arrived at Aston Villa from Partizan Belgrade in the summer of 1995, for a fee of £3.5 million, many claret-and-blue pundits were swift to question the wisdom of Brian Little, the Villa manager. Hunched of gait and all left foot, Milosevic appeared ungainly and unhappy. "The young man obviously has ability," Brian Clough, the former Nottingham Forest manager, said, "but it wouldn't do any harm for him to smile a bit more."

Milosevic, 24, smiles a lot more now. He still has his detractors, his apparent clumsiness often baffles many trained observers and his future at the club is the subject of regular speculation. Yet his displays in the Uefa Cup this season — he has played in five of the six matches against Bordeaux, Athletic Bilbao and Steaua Bucharest — have perhaps won over even his sternest critics.

Without him, it is doubtful that Villa would now be sitting comfortably in the quarter-finals of the competition for the first time in 20 years. It is doubtful they would be in the hat with, among others, Lazio, Schalke 04, the holders, Internazionale and Atlético Madrid when the draw is made in Berne, Switzerland, next Wednesday.

It is also doubtful that Little would be enjoying such managerial comfort, with Villa's ambitions in the FA Carling Premiership having already been cruelly exposed as non-existent. Were it not for the Uefa Cup run, the notorious trigger finger of Doug Ellis, the Villa chairman, might have been getting itchy.

Milosevic's contribution to Villa's European cause was illustrated perfectly in the third-round, second-leg tie against Steaua, the Romanian champions, at Villa Park on Tuesday night. He and his team-mates had strained in vain to overcome the 2-1 first-leg deficit, but were getting nowhere. Steaua were unadventurous yet unyielding.

Then, in the 71st minute, Steve Staunton's lofted, long-range pass cleared the heads of Stan Collymore and Tiberiu Csik and fell nicely for Milosevic. He controlled the ball, took it on a few paces and then beat Zoltan Ritli, the Steaua goalkeeper, with a low, right-footed shot. Five minutes from the end, Ian Taylor's similarly clinical finish completed a 3-2 aggregate success.

Milosevic, who will play for Yugoslavia in the World Cup finals in France next year, scored the goal that gave Villa a 1-0 overall victory against Bordeaux in the first round. His cross gave Taylor the chance to score the opening goal against Bilbao in the second round, second leg, and another left-foot cross led to Dwight Yorke heading home against Steaua in the 2-1 defeat in the first leg in Bucharest.

"This has to be the happiest moment of the season for me so far," Milosevic said. "We played well and perhaps should have scored a few more. Confidence is high and I'm sure we can go on and win the trophy."

A touch premature, perhaps, with much depending on the draw now that the cream has risen to the top. Of the possible last-eight opponents, Villa would probably prefer Auxerre, of France — one of the weaker sides left. "They're all exceptional teams," Little said. "It would be nice in time if people began to look at us in the same way."

At least Milosevic is content. A proposed move to Napoli, of Italy, fell through last month and Villa, contrary to reports, have exercised their one-year option to keep him when his present deal expires at the end of the season. They want him, he wants to stay and — Mr Clough take note — he is smiling a bit more, too.

Scotland line up Chile date

SCOTLAND are almost certain to play Chile in the warm-up to their opening match in the World Cup finals against Brazil on June 10.

Chile are ready to provide Craig Brown's side with a stern test on May 24 as part of their proposed three-match tour of the United States. Scotland have already arranged a home match against Denmark in March and a trip to Finland in April.

Green Flag yesterday announced that it is to end its four-year, £4-million backing of the national team after the World Cup finals.

Chelsea's match against Manchester United in the FA Cup third round will be shown live on Sky television at noon on Sunday, January 4. Everton's match against Newcastle United will be screened by ITV, kicking off at 2.0pm. Tottenham Hotspur will play Fulham at White Hart Lane on Monday, January 5, a match also to be screened live by Sky TV.

MCC keeps its counsel on women

By Ivo Tennant

MCC's committee, which met at Lord's last night to decide whether to recommend that women should be eligible for election, has deferred announcing its views until these have been conveyed to the membership. There was strong opinion expressed that the time has come to enhance women's cricket by admitting both sexes to the club.

A working party, under the chairmanship of Charles Robins, reported to the committee that, as in the past, there are decidedly mixed feelings among the 17,500 members on this contentious issue. A green paper, which is unlikely to be finalised this week, will be sent out before the annual meeting next May, outlining the arguments involved in what Roger Knight, the secretary of MCC, described as "a major issue".

There is a feeling among MCC's officers that the women's game will be furthered if there are no barriers remaining for election to the most famous of all cricket clubs. Yet the committee will stress that, if women are to be elected, they will be joining a 20-year waiting list and will not be allowed to circumvent it.

From the informal meetings of members that the club has undertaken, and from regional surveys carried out by the working party, the committee has gained the impression that a vote in May will be closer than when this topic was last debated in 1991.

There is unlikely to be any tinkering with the club's ruling that a two-thirds majority will be required for women to be elected. Those individuals who will be considered for election as honorary life members will stand the best chance of joining MCC.

Irate fan unbuttons mourning suit

Russell Kempson spies the legal eagles preparing to make a swoop on the FA Premier League

THESE are litigious times that we live in. Tripped over a loose slab in the pavement? Get a solicitor. Received a less than complimentary remark from the boss? Call the lawyer. Bought a ticket for an Oasis concert and watched the Gallagher boys walk off early? Contact Messrs Sue, Grabbit and Run. M'learned friends are having a field day.

Football has generally remained aloof from such behaviour: until yesterday, that is, when it was revealed that Derrick Arnott, a retired insurance executive from Teesside, is suing the FA Premier League, which runs the FA Carling Premiership, for "loss of enjoyment".

He is, apparently, miffed that his beloved Boro were relegated from the Premiership last season after incurring a three-point penalty for failing to fulfil their fixture against Blackburn Rovers at Ewood Park on December 21. Having paid £342 for a season ticket at the Riverside Stadium, he feels that it is wrong that he should have to watch Nationwide League first division fare instead of Premiership action.

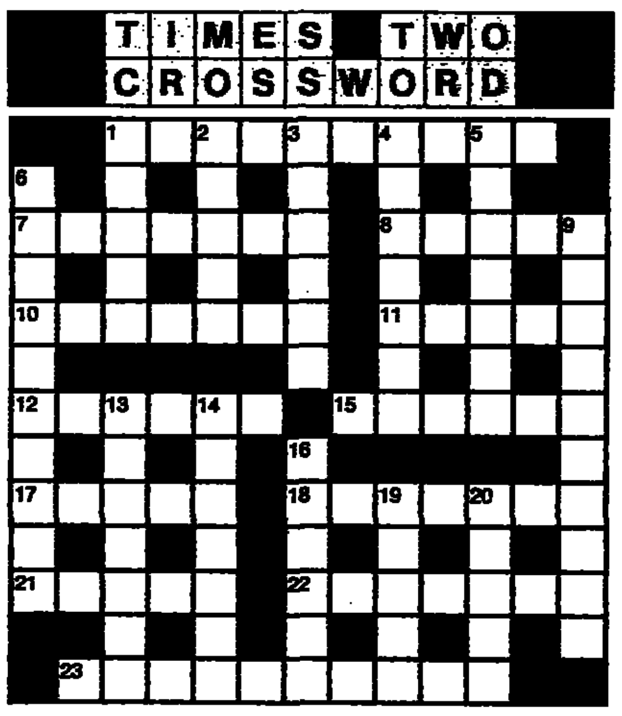
His advisers will argue that the Premier League's rules about calling off games were not clear enough and that satisfactory guidance was not given to Middlesbrough, whose squad was devastated by illness and injury. They will also contest that the so-called "exclusion clause", which prevents clubs from taking legal action over League rules, is contrary to natural justice.

The first round, at least, has been won. The League wanted the case to be held in London but it will now take place in the Middlesbrough small claims court, at a closed hearing, in the new year.

Round two may be more difficult. The League has also taken legal advice and will contend that there is no reasonable case to answer. It denies that Arnott has suffered any loss of enjoyment; after all, it was his choice to purchase the new season ticket, nobody forced him.

"Even if the result is not in my favour, I will be able to find out exactly what happened. That's what it's all about," Arnott said.

Arnott has spent £40 in launching his claim and should he lose, he might have to pay considerable costs to the League. Middlesbrough's 27,999 other season-ticket holders will be looking on with interest. Perhaps their lawyers will be watching, too.



No 1274

ACROSS
1 Fully intended: ponder (10)
7 Confidence trick (7)
8 Brush to clean: cancel (5)
10 Mountain conquered 1953 (7)
11 Blamed by bad workman (5)
12 Steady: one's horses (6)
15 Data arrangements: furniture items (6)
17 Lord —, *Don Juan* author (5)
18 Shy (7)
21 Decree (5)
22 Arousing feelings (7)
23 Putting in of money for profit (10)

DOWN
1 Energy: take car (5)
2 Shelf (5)
3 Cries like sheep; complains pathetically (6)
4, 19 Rock, gave hieroglyph key (7,5)
5 Confusion, bustle (7)
6 Apparent, pretended (10)
9 Very popular item (4-6)
13 Indict (7)
14 Crescent: dome light (7)
16 Most competent (6)
19 See 4
20 Swoon: hard to make out (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1273

ACROSS: 1 Full 3 Frontal 8 Outrage 9 Carat 10 Pagan 11 Hirsute 13 Out-and-out 17 Disturb 19 Lunge 20 Notch 22 Omnibus 23 Squared 24 Feet

DOWN: 1 Floppy 2 Litigious 3 Flesh and blood 4 Oscar 5 Tor 6 Litter 7 Magnet 12 Untenable 14 Oblong 15 Adonis 16 Bedsit 18 Usher 21 Tau

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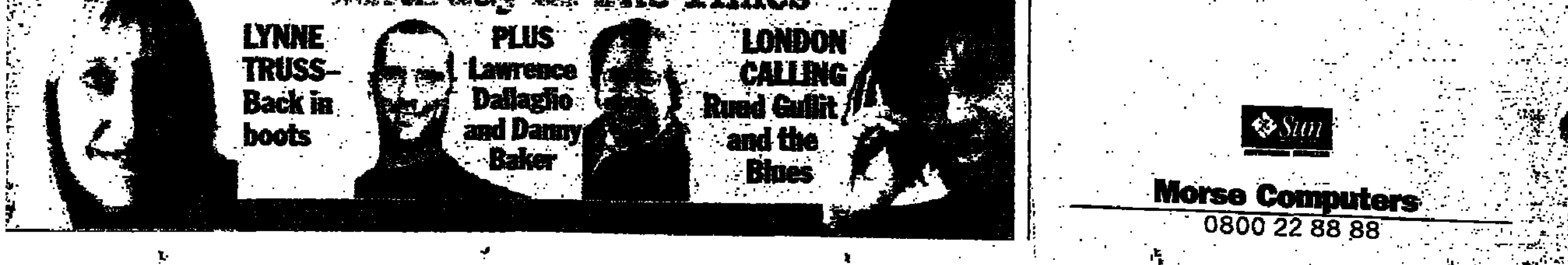
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LONDON CALLING Ruud Gullit and the Blues

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